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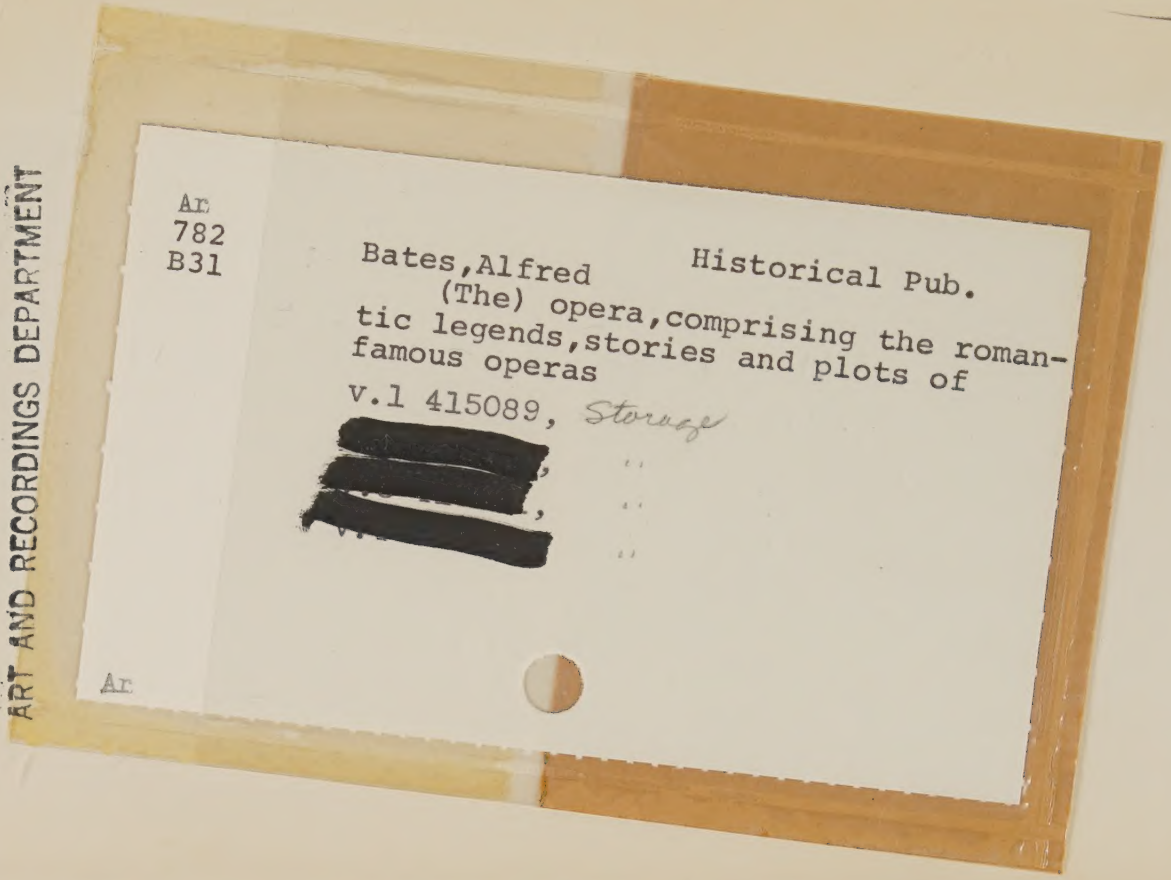

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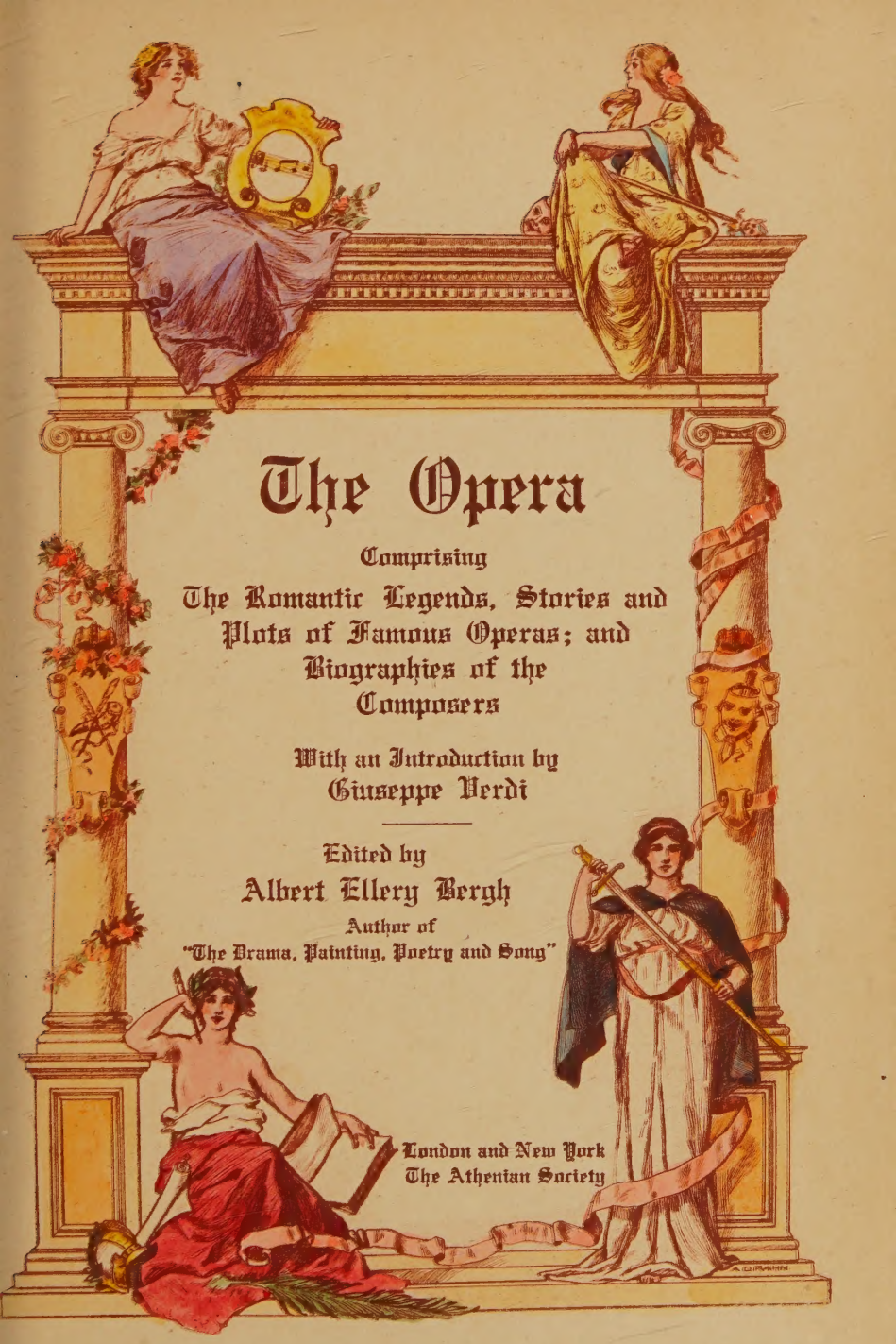

The Opera

Comprising

The Romantic Legends, Stories and Plots of Famous Operas; and Biographies of the Composers

With an Introduction by
Giuseppe Verdi

Edited by
Albert Ellery Bergh
Author of
"The Drama, Painting, Poetry and Song"

London and New York
The Athenian Society

THE GREAT COMPOSERS AND FAMOUS OPERATIC SINGERS.

After an original design by Alexander Malcolm and Cornelius J. Hayes

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The Opera

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Special Introduction
BY
GIUSEPPE VERDI

VOLUME I

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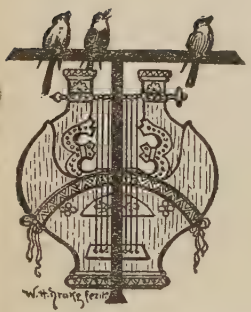
Introduction



HE pursuit of education may not be confined to the acquisition of book knowledge, for in its true and higher sense education is elevation of the moral and intellectual perceptions, instigating to those lofty aims that lead to all the pleasurable attainments imagination pictures. Babbling brooks and hedge choristers have voices that teach scarcely less effectively receptive and contemplative minds than does the most learned preceptor, for song is the universal language of aspiration, which begets the master artisan who builds the splendid castles of our dreams. The first invocation was the ejaculation, "Oh, God!" The human ear, however, was quick to catch the sweet harmonies that welled from warblers of the woods, and by these our primitive progenitors were taught to chant their orisons:

"With heavenly touch of instrumental sound
In full harmonic number joined, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven."

Music and poetry are arts that appeal to heart and soul, stirring the savage to manifestations of ecstacy, as well as moving with feelings of delight the most cultured and refined. In this respect music is the art of arts, the alphabet and the science, the incentive and the crown of that education which is the surest promotive of good citizenship, as well as of enjoyment.

The story-writer has been the greatest contributor to the world's entertainment, but the song-writer has added most to the world's pleasure; the two conjoining their talents have had immeasurable influence in elevating and refining all peoples, and hence all nations. National hymns have powerfully re-enforced national armies, for they may be said to be not merely stimulative, but creators of patriotism. Religion is not less benefited by psalmody, and the domestic hearth is made dearer to us by songs in the family circle.

The supreme type of music is the opera, because it represents the marriage of story and song, a union of those twin arts which approach so nearly the divine, a veritable apostrophe of that poetic sentiment which we feel in the stillness of isolation, and which burns with fiercer glow under the thrilling serenade of the grand concert. Opera is quite as dependent upon story as upon music, and while the ear is always pleased with sweet sounds, a proper appreciation of opera is not possible without a knowledge of the tale which it unfolds by song. It has, therefore, long been a matter of much surprise that the music-loving people of all countries have given so little study to the tales of the operas which have pleased them. True it is, librettos are always on sale, but as a rule they are so little regarded that it is

hardly exaggerating the facts to say scarcely one person in ten is familiar with the stories of the most famous operas. With much gratification do I therefore hail the publication treating of the great operas as a work that supplies an imperative need to cultured persons. I believe this excellent book will be of real value to the whole musical world. The tales herein will be of infinite value by way of cultivating an interest in opera among the masses, for readers thereof will be afforded such pleasure that desire will be created to hear the operatic dramatizations, and thus the holy influence of song and story will be graciously diffused, t othe pleasure and benefit of all peoples.

[*Translation from the Italian.*]

Contents

PAGE

Beginning of the Lyric Drama 1
Monteverde 3
Cavalli 4
Cesti 5
Spread of the New Art-Form 6
Cambert 7
Lulli 8
Purcell 9
Early German Operas 12
Keiser 13
Handel's Almira 13
Scarlatti 14
Handel's Operatic Successes 15
Marais—Rameau 18
Gluck, Founder of the New School of Opera . . . 21
Orpheus and Eurydice 22
Alceste 25
Iphigenia in Aulis 30
Armide 33
Iphigenia in Tauris 36
Beginnings of Light Opera— 41
Opera Buffa, Opera Comique and Singspiel . . 41
Logroscino 43
Pergolesi and Jomelli 43
Rousseau 44
Monsigny 45
Grétry 46
Philidor 47

PAGE

Piccinni 48
Cimarosa 49
Il Matrimonio Segreto 50
Paisiello 51
Paer 51
The Singspiel 52
Mozart 55
Idomeneo 64
The Abduction from the Seraglio 67
Der Schauspieldirektor 70
L'Oie du Caïre 70
The Marriage of Figaro 70
Don Giovanni 75
Cosi fan tutte 78
La Clemenza di Tito 79
The Magic Flute 80
Close of the Classical Period 85
Méhul 86
Joseph in Egypt 88
Lesueur 89
Spontini 90
La Vestale 91
Imitations of Mozart 93
Isouard 93
Cherubini 95
Les Deux Journées 98
Beethoven 101
Fidelio 106
Boieldieu 111
La Dame Blanche 112
Jean de Paris 114
Weber, Founder of the Romantic School 119
Silvana 128
Abu Hassan 131
Preciosa 133
Der Freischütz 136
Euryanthe 140
Oberon, King of the Fairies 142

PAGE

Spohr 145
Jessonda 149
Marschner 151
Hans Heiling 153
The Templar and the Jewess 156
The Vampire 158
Evolution of the Singspiel 163
Kreutzer 163
Das Nachtlager von Granada 164
Lortzing 166
Die Beiden Schützen 167
Czar und Zimmermann 170
Der Wildschütz 173
Undine 175
Der Waffensmied 178
Flotow 179
Alessandro Stradella 182
Martha 183
Nicolai 187
The Merry Wives of Windsor 189
Mendelssohn, Schubert and Schumann 193
Genoveva 194
Italian Opera in the Last Century 199
French Opera in the Last Century 211
Modern German Opera 223
Modern Italian Opera 257
Modern French Opera 279
The Opera in England 313
The Opera in Spain 335
The Opera in Russia 337
Scandinavian Opera 341
The Opera in America 345

Illustrations

FACING PAGE

THE GREAT COMPOSERS AND FAMOUS OPERATIC SINGERS.....*Frontispiece*
After an original design by Alexander Malcolm and Cornelius J. Hayes

MUSICAL DESIGN.....*Special Introduction*
After an original drawing by W. H. Drake

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE..... 20
Photogravure reproduction of the original painting

FRA DIAVOLO..... 210
Photogravure reproduction of the original painting

The Opera

The Beginning of the Lyric Drama.

The early history of many forms of art is wrapped in obscurity. Even in music, the youngest of the arts, the precise origin of many modern developments is largely a matter of conjecture. The history of opera, fortunately for the historian, is an exception to the rule. All the circumstances which combine to produce the idea of opera are known to us, and every detail of its genesis is established beyond the possibility of doubt.

The invention of opera partook largely of the nature of an accident. Late in the sixteenth century a few Florentine amateurs, fired with the enthusiasm for Greek art, which was at that time the ruling passion of every cultivated spirit in Italy, set themselves the task of reconstructing the conditions of the Athenian drama. The result of their labors, regarded as an attempted revival of the lost glories of Greek tragedy, was a complete failure; but, unknown to themselves, they produced the germ of that art-form which, as years passed on, was destined, in their own country at least, to reign alone in the affections of the people, and to take the place, so far as the altered conditions permitted, of the national drama which they had fondly hoped to recreate.

The foundations of the new art-form rested upon the

theory that the drama of the Greeks was throughout declaimed to a musical accompaniment. The reformers, therefore, dismissed spoken dialogue from their drama, and employed in its place a species of free declamation or recitative, which they called *musica parlante.*

The first work in which the new style of composition was used was the "Dafne" of Jacopo Peri, which was privately performed in 1597. No trace of this work survives, nor of the musical dramas by Emilio del Cavaliere and Vincenzo Galilei to which the closing years of the sixteenth century gave birth. But it is best to regard these privately performed works merely as experiments, and to date the actual foundation of opera from the year 1600, when a public performance of Peri's *Euridice* was given at Florence in honor of the marriage of Maria de' Medici and Henry IV of France. A few years later a printed edition of this work was published at Venice, a copy of which is now in the library of the British Museum, and in recent times it has been reprinted, so that those who are curious in these matters can study this protoplasmic opera at their leisure. Except for a few bars of insignificant chorus, the whole work consists of the accompanied recitative, which was the invention of these Florentine reformers. The voices are accompanied by a violin, *chitarone* (a large guitar), *lira grande, liuto grosso,* and *gravicembalo* or harpsichord, which filled in the harmonies indicated by the figured bass. The instrumental portions of the work are poor and thin, and the chief beauty lies in the vocal part, which is often really pathetic and expressive.

Peri evidently tried to give musical form to the ordinary inflections of the human voice, how successfully may be seen in the Lament of Orpheus which Morton Latham has reprinted in his "Renaissance of Music." The original edition of *Euridice* contains an interesting preface, in which the composer sets forth the theory upon which he worked, and the aims which he had in view. It is too long to be reprinted here, but should be read by all interested in the early history of opera.

Monteverde.

With the production of "Euridice" the history of opera may be said to begin; but if the new art-form had depended only upon the efforts of Peri and his friends, it must soon have languished and died. With all their enthusiasm, the little band of Florentines had too slight an acquaintance with the science of music to give proper effect to the ideas which they originated. Peri built the ship, but it was reserved for the genius of Claudio Monteverde (1567-1643) to launch it upon a wider ocean than his predecessor could have dreamed of. Monteverde had been trained in the polyphonic school of Palestrina, but his genius had never acquiesced in the rules and restrictions in which the older masters delighted. He was a poor contrapuntist, and his madrigals are chiefly interesting as a proof of how ill the novel harmonies of which he was the discoverer accorded with the severe purity of the older school. But in the new art he found the field his genius required. What had been weakness and license in the madrigal became

strength and beauty in the opera. The new wine was put into new bottles, and both were preserved.

Monteverde produced his "Arianna" in 1607, and his *Orfeo* in 1608, and with these two works started opera upon the path of development which was to culminate in the works of Wagner. "Arianna," which, according to Marco da Gagliano, himself a rival composer of high ability, "visibly moved all the theatre to tears," is lost to us, save for a few quotations; but *Orfeo* is in existence, and has recently been reprinted in Germany. A glance at the score shows what a gulf separates this work from Peri's treatment of the same story. Monteverde, with his orchestra of thirty-nine instruments—brass, wood, and strings, complete—his rich and brilliant harmonies, sounding so strangely beautiful to ears accustomed only to the severity of the polyphonic school, and his delicious and affecting melodies, sometimes rising almost to the dignity of an aria, must have seemed something more than human to the eager Venetians as they listened for the first time to music as rich in color as the gleaming marbles of the Ca d'Oro or the radiant canvases of Titian and Giorgione.

Cavalli.

The success of Monteverde had its natural result. He soon had pupils and imitators by the score. The Venetians speedily discovered that they had an inherent taste for opera, and the musicians of the day delighted to cater for it. Monteverde's most famous pupil was Francesco Cavalli (1599-1676) to whom may with some certainty be attributed an innovation which was

destined to affect the future of opera very deeply. In his time, to quote Latham's "Rennaissance of Music," "The *musica parlante* of the earliest days of opera was broken up into recitative, which was less eloquent, and aria, which was more ornamental. The first appearance of this change is to be found in Cavalli's operas, in which certain rhythmical movements called "arias," which are quite distinct from the *musica parlante,* make their appearance. The music assigned by Monteverde to Orpheus when he is leading Eurydice back from the Shades is undoubtedly an air, but the situation is one to which an air is appropriate, and *musica parlante* would be inappropriate. If the drama had been a play to be spoken and not sung, there would not have been any incongruity in allotting a song to Orpheus, to enable Eurydice to trace him through the dark abodes of Hades. But the arias of Cavalli are not confined to such special situations, and recur frequently."

Cavalli had the true Venetian love of color. In his hands the orchestra began to assume a new importance. His attempts to give musical expression to the sights and sounds of nature—the murmur of the sea, the rippling of the brook and the tempestuous fury of the winds—mark an interesting step in the history of orchestral development.

Cesti.

With Marcantonio Cesti (1620-1669) appears another innovation of scarcely less importance to the history of opera than the invention of the aria itself—the *da capo,* or the repetition of the first part of the

aria in its entirety after the conclusion of the second part. However much the *da capo* may have contributed to the settlement of form in composition, it must be admitted that it struck at the root of all real dramatic effect, and in process of time degraded opera to the level of a concert. Cesti was a pupil of Carissimi, who is famous chiefly for his sacred works, and from him he learnt to prefer mere musical beauty to dramatic truth. Those of his operas which remain to us show a far greater command of orchestral and vocal resource than Monteverde or Cavalli could boast, but, so far as real expression and sincerity are concerned, they are inferior to the less cultured efforts of the earlier musicians. It would be idle to attempt an enumeration of the Venetian composers of the seventeenth century and their works. Some idea of the musical activity which prevailed may be gathered from the fact that while the first public theatre was opened in 1637, before the close of the century there were no less than eleven theatres in the city devoted to the performance of opera alone. alone.

Spread of the New Art-Form.

Meanwhile the enthusiasm for the new art-form spread through the cities of Italy. According to an extant letter of Salvator Rosa's, opera was in full swing in Rome during the Carnival of 1652. The first opera of Provenzale, the founder of the Neapolitan school, was produced in 1658. Bologna, Milan, Parma, and other cities soon followed suit. France, too, was not behindhand, but there the development of the art soon

deserved the name of a new school of opera, distinct in many important particulars from its parent in Italy. The French nobles who saw the performance of Peri's "Euridice" at the marriage of Henry IV. may have carried back tales of its splendor and beauty to their own country, but Paris was not as yet ripe for opera. Not until 1647 did the French Court make the acquaintance of the new art which was afterwards to win some of its most brilliant triumphs in their city. In that year a performance of Peri's "Euridice" (which, in spite of newer developments, had not lost its popularity) was given in Paris under the patronage of Cardinal Mazarin. This was followed by Cavalli's *Serse,* conducted by the composer himself.

Cambert.

These performances quickened the latent genius of the French people, and Robert Cambert (1628-1677), the founder of their school, hastened to produce operas, which, though bearing traces of Italian influence, were nevertheless distinctively French in manner and method. His works, two of which are known to us, *Pomone* and *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour,* were to a certain extent a development of the masques which had been popular in Paris for many years. They are pastoral and allegorical in subject, and are often merely a vehicle for fulsome adulation of the *Roi Soleil.* But in construction they are operas pure and simple. There is no spoken dialogue, and the music is continuous from first to last. Cambert's operas were very successful,

and in conjunction with his librettist Perrin he received a charter from the King in 1669, giving him the sole right of establishing opera-houses in the kingdom. Quarrels, however, ensued. Cambert and Perrin separated.

Giovanni Battista Lulli.

The charter was revoked, or rather granted to a newcomer, Giovanni Battista Lulli, and Cambert, in disgrace, retired to England, where he died. Lulli (1633-1687) left Italy too young to be much influenced by the developments of opera in that country, and was besides too good a man of business to allow his artistic instinct to interfere with his chance of success. He found Cambert"s operas popular in Paris, and, instead of attempting any radical reforms, he adhered to the form which he found ready-made, only developing the orchestra to an extent which was then unknown, and adding dignity and passion to the airs and recitatives. Lulli's industry was extraordinary.

During the space of fourteen years he wrote no fewer than twenty operas, conceived upon a grand scale and produced with great magnificence. His treatment of recitative is perhaps his strongest point, for, in spite of the beauty of one or two isolated songs, such as the famous " Bois épais " in *Amadis* and Charon's wonderful air in *Alceste,* his melodic gift was not great, and his choral writing is generally of the most unpretentious description. But his recitative is always solid and dignified, and often impassioned and pathetic. Music, too, owes him a great debt for his invention of what is

known as the French form of overture, consisting of a prelude, fugue, and dance movement, which was afterwards carried to the highest conceivable pitch of perfection by Handel.

Purcell.

Meanwhile an offshoot of the French school, transplanted to the banks of the Thames, had blossomed into a brief but brilliant life under the fostering care of the greatest musical genius the island has ever produced, Henry Purcell. Charles II. was not a profound musician, but he knew what sort of music he liked, and on one point his mind was made up—that he did not like the music of the elderly composers who had survived the Protectorate, and came forward at his restoration to claim the posts which they had held at his father's court. Christopher Gibbons, Child, and other relics of the dead polyphonic school were quietly dismissed to provincial organ-lofts, and Pelham Humphreys, the most promising of the "Children of the Chapel Royal," was sent over to Paris to learn all that was newest in music at the feet of Lulli. Humphreys came back, in the words of Pepys, "an absolute Monsieur," full of the latest theories concerning opera and music generally, and with a sublime contempt for the efforts of his stay-at-home colleagues. His own music shows the French influence very strongly, and in that of his pupil, Henry Purcell (1658-1695), it may also be perceived, although colored and transmuted by the intensely English character of Purcell's own genius.

For many years it was supposed that Purcell's first

and, strictly speaking, his only opera, *Dido and Æneas,* was written by him at the age of seventeen and produced in 1675. Barclay Squire has now proved that it was not produced until much later, but this scarcely lessens the wonder of it, for Purcell could never have seen an opera performed, and his acquaintance with the new art-form must have been based upon Pelham Humphrey's account of the performances which he had seen in Paris. Possibly, too, he may have had opportunities of studying the engraved scores of some of Lulli's operas, which, considering the close intercourse between the courts of France and England, may have found their way across the Channel.

Dido and Æneas is now universally spoken of as the first English opera. Masques had been popular from the time of Queen Elizabeth onwards, which the greatest living poets and musicians had not disdained to produce, and Sir William Davenant had given performances of musical dramas "after the manner of the Ancients" during the closing years of the Commonwealth, but it is probable that spoken dialogue occurred in all these entertainments, as it certainly did in Locke's *Psyche,* Banister's *Circe,* and, in fact, in all the dramatic works of this period which were wrongly described as operas. In *Dido and Æneas,* on the contrary, the music is continuous throughout. Airs and recitatives, choruses and instrumental pieces succeed each other, as in the operas of the Italian and French schools. *Dido and Æneas* was written for performance at a young ladies' school kept by one Josias Priest in Leicester Fields and afterwards at Chelsea. The libretto was the work of Nahum Tate, the Poet Lau-

reate of the time. The opera is in three short acts, and Virgil's version of the story is followed pretty closely, save for the intrusion of a sorceress and a chorus of witches who have sworn Dido's destruction and send a messenger to Æneas, disguised as Mercury, to hasten his departure. Dido's death song, which is followed by a chorus of mourning Cupids, is one of the most pathetic scenes ever written, and illustrates in a forcible manner Purcell's beautiful and ingenious use of a ground-bass. The gloomy chromatic passage constantly repeated by the bass instruments, with ever-varying harmonies in the violins, paints such a picture of the blank despair of a broken heart as Wagner himself, with his immense orchestral resources, never surpassed. In the general construction of his opera Purcell followed the French model, but his treatment of recitative is bolder and more various than that of Lulli, while as a melodist he is incomparably superior.

Purcell never repeated the experiment of *Dido and Æneas.* Musical taste in England was presumably not cultivated enough to appreciate a work of so advanced a style. At any rate, for the rest of his life, Purcell wrote nothing for the theatre but incidental music. Much of this, notably the scores of *Timon of Athens, Bonduca,* and *King Arthur,* is wonderfully beautiful, but in all of these works the spoken dialogue forms the basis of the piece, and the music is merely an adjunct, often with little reference to the main interest of the play. In *King Arthur* occurs the famous Frost scene, the close resemblance of which to the "Chœur de Peuples des Climats Glacés" in Lulli's *Isis* would alone

make it certain that Purcell was a careful student of the French school of opera.

Early German Operas.

Opera did not take long to cross the Alps, and early in the seventeenth century the works of Italian composers found a warm welcome at the courts of southern Germany. But Germany was not as yet ripe for a national opera. During the first half of the century there are records of one or two isolated attempts to found a school of German opera, but the iron heel of the Thirty Years' War was on the neck of the country, and art struggled in vain against overwhelming odds. The first German opera, strictly so called, was the *Dafne* of Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672), the words of which were a translation of the libretto already used by Peri. Of this work, which was produced in 1627, all trace has been lost. *Seelewig,* by Sigmund Staden, which is described as a "Gesangweis auf italienische Art gesetzet," was printed at Nuremberg in 1644, but there is no record of its ever having been performed. To Hamburg belongs the honor of establishing German opera upon a permanent basis. There, in 1678, some years before the production of Purcell's *Dido and Æneas,* an opera-house was opened with a performance of a Singspiel entitled *Der erschaffene, gefallene und aufgerichtete Mensch,* the music of which was composed by Johann Theile. Three other works, all of them secular, were produced in the same year. The new form of entertainment speedily became popular among the rich burghers of the Free City, and composers were easily found to cater for their taste.

Keiser.

For many years Hamburg was the only German town where opera found a permanent home, but there the musical activity must have been remarkable. Reinhard Keiser (1673-1739), the composer whose name stands for what was best in the school, is said alone to have produced no fewer than a hundred and sixteen operas. Nearly all of these works have disappeared, and those that remain are for the most part disfigured by the barbarous mixture of Italian and German which was fashionable at Hamburg and in London too at that time. The singers were possibly for the most part Italians, who insisted upon singing their airs in their native language, though they had no objection to using German for the recitatives, in which there was no opportunity for vocal display. Keiser's music lacks the suavity of the Italian school, but his recitatives are vigorous and powerful, and seem to foreshadow the triumphs which the German school was afterwards to win in declamatory music.

Handel's Almira.

The earliest operas of Handel (1685-1759) were written for Hamburg, and in the one of them which Fate has preserved for us, *Almira* (1704), we see the Hamburg school at its finest. In spite of the ludicrous mixture of German and Italian there is a good deal of dramatic power in the music, and the airs show how early Handel's wonderful gift of melody had developed. The chorus has very little to do, but a delightful fea-

ture of the work is to be found in the series of beautiful dance-tunes lavishly scattered throughout it. One of these, a Sarabande, was afterwards worked up into the famous air, "Lascia ch' io pianga," in *Rinaldo*. When the new Hamburg Opera-House was opened in 1874, it was inaugurated by a performance of "Almira," which gave musicians a unique opportunity of realizing to some extent what opera was like at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1706 Handel left Hamburg for the purpose of prosecuting his studies in Italy.

Alessandro Scarlatti.

In Italy Handel found the world at the feet of Alessandro Scarlatti (1659-1725), a composer whose importance to the history of opera can scarcely be overestimated. He is said, like Cesti, to have been a pupil of Carissimi, though, as the latter died in 1674, at the age of seventy, he cannot have done much more than lay the foundation of his pupil's greatness. The invention of the *da capo* is generally attributed to Scarlatti, wrongly, as has already been shown, since it appears in Cesti's opera *La Dori,* which was performed in 1663. But it seems almost certain that Scarlatti was the first to use accompanied recitative, a powerful means of dramatic expression in the hands of all who followed him, while his genius advanced the science of instrumentation to a point hitherto unknown.

Nevertheless, Scarlatti's efforts were almost exclusively addressed to the development of the musical rather than the dramatic side of opera, and he is largely responsible for the strait-jacket of convention in which

opera was confined during the greater part of the eighteenth century—in fact, until it was released by the genius of Glück.

Handel's Operatic Successes.

Handel's conquest of Italy was speedy and decisive. *Rodrigo,* produced at Florence in 1707, made him famous, and *Agrippina* (Venice, 1708) raised him almost to the rank of a god. At every pause in the performance the theatre rang with shouts of "Viva il caro Sassone," and the opera had an unbroken run of twenty-seven nights, a thing till then unheard of. It did not take Handel long to learn all that Italy could teach him. With his inexhaustible fertility of melody and his complete command of every musical resource then known, he only needed to have his German vigor tempered by Italian suppleness and grace to stand forth as the foremost operatic composer of the age. His Italian training and his theatrical experience gave him a thorough knowledge of the capabilities of the human voice, and the practical common-sense which was always one of his most striking characteristics prevented him from ever treating it from the merely instrumental point of view, a pitfall into which many of the great composers have fallen.

Handel left Italy for London in 1710, and produced his *Rinaldo* at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket the following year. It was put upon the stage with unexampled magnificence, and its success was prodigious. *Rinaldo* was quickly followed by such a succession of

masterpieces as put the ancient glories of the Italian stage to shame. Most of them were produced at the Haymarket Theatre, either under Handel's own management or under the auspices of a company known as the Royal Academy of Music. Handel's success made him many enemies, and he was throughout his career the object of innumerable plots on the part of disappointed and envious rivals. The most active of these was Buononcini, himself a composer of no mean ability, though eclipsed by the genius of Handel. Buononcini's machinations were so far successful—though he himself was compelled to leave England in disgrace for different reasons—that in 1741, after the production of his *Deidamia,* Handel succumbed to bankruptcy and a severe attack of paralysis. After this he wrote no more for the stage, but devoted himself to the production of those oratorios which have made his name famous wherever the English language is spoken.

In spite of their transcendent beauties, the form of Handel's operas has long banished them from the stage. Handel, with all his genius, was not one of the great revolutionists of the history of music. He was content to bring existing forms to the highest possible point of perfection, without seeking to embark upon new oceans of discovery. Opera in his day consisted of a string of airs connected by recitative, with an occasional duet, and a chorus to bring down the curtain at the end of the work. The airs were, as a rule, fully accompanied. Strings, hautboys and bassoons formed the groundwork of the orchestra. If distinctive coloring or sonority were required, the composer used flutes, horns, harps and trumpets, while to gain an effect of a special nature

he would call in the assitance of lutes and mandolins, or archaic instruments, such as the viola da gamba, violetta marina, cornetto and theorbo. The *recitativo secco* was accompanied by the harpsichord, at which the composer himself presided. The *recitativo stromentato,* or accompanied recitative, was only used to emphasize situations of special importance.

Handel's incomparable genius infused so much dramatic power into this meagre form, that even now the truth and sincerity of his songs charm us no less than their extraordinary melodic beauty. But it is easy to see that, in the hands of composers less richly endowed, this form was fated to degenerate into a mere concert upon the stage. The science of vocalization was cultivated to such a pitch of perfection that composers were tempted, and even compelled, to consult the tastes of singers rather than dramatic truth. Handel's successors, such as Porpora and Hasse, without a tithe of his genius, used such talent as they possessed merely to exhibit the vocal dexterity of popular singers in the most agreeable light. The favorite form of entertainment in these degraded times was the pasticcio, a hybrid production composed of a selection of songs from various popular operas, often by three or four different composers, strung together regardless of rhyme or reason. Even in Handel's lifetime the older school of opera was tottering to its fall. Only the man was needed who should sweep the mass of insincerity from the stage and replace it by the purer ideal which had been the guiding spirit of Peri and Monteverde.

Marais—Rameau.

The death of Lulli left French opera established upon a sure foundation. The form which he perfected seemed, with all its faults, to commend itself to the genius of the nation, and for many years a succession of his followers and imitators, such as Campra and Destouches, continued to produce works which differed little in scope and execution from the model he had established. The French drama of the seventeenth century had reached such a high point of development that its influence over the sister art was all-powerful. The composers of the French court willingly sacrificed musical to declamatory interest, and thus, while they steered clear of the mere tunefulness which was the rock on which Italian composers made shipwreck, they fell into the opposite extreme and wrote works which seem to us arid and jejune. Paris by this time was curiously isolated from the world of music, and it is strange to find how little the development of Italian opera affected the French school.

Marais (1650-1718) was more alive to Southern influences than most of his contemporaries, and in his treatment of the aria there is a perceptible approach to Italian methods; but Rameau (1683-1764) brought back French opera once more to its distinctive national style. Though he followed the general lines of Lulli's school, he brought to bear upon it a richer sense of beauty and a completer musical organization than Lulli ever possessed. In his treatment of declamation pure and simple, he was perhaps Lulli's inferior, but in all other respects he showed a decided advance upon his

predecessor. He infused new life into the monotonous harmony and well-worn modulations which had done duty for so many years. His rhythms were novel and suggestive, and the originality and resource of his orchestration opened the eyes of Frenchmen to new worlds of beauty and expression. Not the least important part of Rameau's work lay in the influence which his music exerted upon the genius of the man to whom the regeneration of opera is mainly due.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Photogravure reproduction of the original painting

ORPHEUS. *Eurydice! Come with me,*
Of my unchanged love
The only cherished object.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.—ACT IV.—SCENE I.

Gluck

Founder of the Modern School of Opera.

Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787) was the son of a forester. Such musical education as he received he acquired in Italy, and his earlier works are written in the Italian style which was fashionable at the time. There are few indications in his youthful operas of the power which was destined later to work such changes in the world of opera. He was at first whole-hearted in his devotion to the school of Porpora, Hasse, and the others who did so much to degrade Italian opera. *Artaserse,* his first work, was produced in 1741, the year in which Handel bade farewell forever to the stage. It was successful, and was promptly followed by others no less fortunate.

In 1745, Gluck visited England, where he produced *La Caduta de Giganti,* a work which excited the contempt of Handel. In the following year he produced *Piramo e Tisbe,* a pasticcio, which failed completely. Its production, however, was by no means labor lost, if it be true, as the story goes, that it was by its means that Gluck's eyes were opened to the degradation to which opera had been reduced. It was about this time

that Gluck first heard Rameau's music, and the power and simplicity of it, compared with the empty sensuousness of Italian opera, must have materially strengthened him in the desire to do something to reform and purify his art. Yet, in spite of good resolutions, Gluck's progress was slow. In 1755 he settled in Vienna, and there, under the shadow of the court, he produced a series of works in which the attempt to realize dramatic truth is often distinctly perceptible, though the composer had as yet not mastered the means for its attainment.

Orpheus and Eurydice.

Opera in four acts by Gluck. Libretto by Calzabigi.

Characters: Orpheus; Eurydice; Amor; chorus; shepherds and shepherdesses; furies and demons; heroes and heroines; in Hades.

First produced at Vienna in 1762.

In 1762 Gluck produced *Orfeo ed Euridice,* a work which placed him at the head of all living operatic composers, and laid the foundation of the modern school of opera.

The libretto of *Orfeo* was by Calzabigi, a prominent man of letters, but it seems probable that Gluck's own share in it was not a small one. The careful study which he had given to the proper conditions of opera was not likely to exclude so important a question as that of the construction and diction of the libretto, and the poem of *Orfeo* shows so marked an inclination to break away from the conventionality and sham sentiment of the time that we can confidently attribute much

of its originality to the influence of the composer himself.

The opening scene shows the tomb of Eurydice erected in a grassy valley. Orpheus stands beside it, plunged in the deepest grief, while a troop of shepherds and maidens bring flowers to adorn it. His despairing cry of "Eurydice" breaks passionately upon their mournful chorus, and the whole scene, though drawn in simple lines, is instinct with genuine pathos. When the rustic mourners have laid their gifts upon the tomb and departed, Orpheus calls upon the shade of his lost wife in an air of exquisite beauty, broken by expressive recitative. He declares his resolution of following her to the underworld, when Eros enters and tells him of the conditions which the gods impose on him if he should attempt to rescue Eurydice from the shades. Left to himself, Orpheus discusses the question of the rescue in a recitative of great intrinsic power, which shows at a glance how far Gluck had already distanced his predecessors in variety and dramatic strength.

The second act takes place in the underworld. The chorus of Furies is both picturesque and effective, and the barking of Cerberus which sounds through it is a touch, which, though its *naïvete* may provoke a smile, is characteristic of Gluck's strenuous struggle for realism. Orpheus appears and pleads his cause in accents of touching entreaty. Time after time his pathetic song is broken by a sternly decisive "No," but in the end he triumphs, and the Furies grant him passage. The next scene is in the Elysian fields. After an introduction of charming grace, the spirits of the blessed are discovered disporting themselves after their kind. Orpheus ap-

pears, lost in wonder at the magical beauty of all around him. Here again is a remarkable instance of Gluck's pictorial power. Simple as are the means he employs, the effect is extraordinary. The murmuring of streams, the singing of birds, and the placid beauty of the landscape are depicted with a touch which, if light, is infallibly sure. Then follows the famous scene in which Orpheus, forbidden to look at the face of his beloved, tries to find her by touch and instinct among the crowd of happy spirits who pass him by. At last she approaches, and he clasps her in his arms, while a chorus of perfect beauty bids him farewell as he leads her in triumph to the world above.

The third act shows the two wandering in a cavern on their way to the light of day. Eurydice is grieved that her husband should never look into her eyes, and her faith is growing cold. After a scene in which passionate beauty goes side by side with strange relapses into conventionality, Orpheus gives way to her prayers and reproaches, and turns to embrace her. In a moment she sinks back lifeless, and he pours forth his despair in the immortal strains of "Che faro senza Euridice." Eros then appears, and tells him that the gods have had pity upon his sorrow. He transports him to the Temple of Love, where Eurydice, restored to life, is awaiting him, and the opera ends with conventional rejoicings.

Beautiful as *Orfeo* is—and the best proof of its enduring beauty is that, after nearly a hundred and fifty years of change and development, it has lost none of its power to charm—we must not be blind to the fact that it is a strange combination of strength and weakness. Strictly speaking, Gluck was by no means a first-

rate musician, and in 1762 he had not mastered his new gospel of sincerity and truth so fully as to disguise the poverty of his technical equipment. Much of the orchestral part of the work is weak and thin. Berlioz even went so far as to describe the overture as *une niaiserie incroyable,* and the vocal part sometimes shows the influene of the empty formulas from which Glück was trying to escape. Throughout the opera there are unmistakable traces of Rameau's influence; indeed it is plain that Gluck frankly took Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* as his model when he sat down to compose *Orfeo.*

The plot of the earlier work, the rescue of Pollux by Castor from the infernal regions, has of course much in common with that of *Orfeo,* and it is obvious that Gluck took many hints from Rameau's musical treatment of the various scenes which the two works have in common.

In spite, however, of occasional weaknesses, *Orfeo* is a work of consummate loveliness. Compared to the tortured complexity of our modern operas, it stands in its dignified simplicity like the Parthenon beside the bewildering beauty of a Gothic cathedral; and its truth and grandeur are perhaps the more conspicuous because allied to one of those classic stories which even in Gluck's time had become almost synonymous with emptiness and formality.

Alceste.

Opera in three acts by Gluck. Libretto by Calzabigi. Characters: Admetos, King of Pheræ; Alcestis,

wife of Admetos; Evandor, High Priest of Apollo; Hercules; Apollo; Thanatos, the god of death.

Place, at Pheræ and vicinity. First produced in 1767 at Vienna.

Five years elapsed between the production of *Orfeo* and of Gluck's next great opera, *Alceste;* but that these years were not wasted is proved by the great advance which is perceptible in the score of the later work. The libretto of *Alceste* is in many ways superior to that of *Orfeo,* and Gluck's share of the work shows an incontestable improvement upon anything he had yet done. His touch is firmer, and he rarely shows that inclination to drop back into the old conventional style, which occasionally mars the beauty of *Orfeo.* Gluck wrote a preface to the published score of *Alceste,* which is one of the most interesting documents in the history of music. It proves conclusively—not that any proof is necessary—that the composer had thought long and seriously about the scope of his art, and that the reforms which he introduced were a deliberate attempt to reconstruct opera upon a new basis of ideal beauty. If he sometimes failed to act up to his own theories, it must be remembered in what school he had been trained, and how difficult must have been the attempt to cast off in a moment the style which had been habitual to him for so many years.

When *Alceste* was produced in Paris in 1776, Gluck made some alterations in the score, some of which were scarcely improvements. In his later years he became so completely identified with the French school that the later version is now the more familiar.

The opera opens before the palace at Pheræ, where

the people are gathered to pray Heaven to spare the life of Admetus, who lies at the point of death. Alcestis appears, and, after an air of great dignity and beauty, bids the people follow her to the temple, there to renew their supplications. The next scene shows the temple of Apollo. The high priest and the people make passionate appeal to the god for the life of their king, and the oracle replies that Admetus must perish, if no other will die in his place. The people, seized with terror, fly from the place, and Alcestis, left alone, determines to give up her own life for that of her husband. The high priest accepts her devotion, and in the famous air "Divinités du Styx" she offers herself a willing sacrifice to the gods below. In the original version the second act opened with a scene in a gloomy forest, in which Alcestis interviews the spirits of Death, and, after renewing her vow, obtains leave to return and bid farewell to her husband. The music of this scene is exceedingly impressive, and intrinsically it must have been one of the finest in the opera, but it does not advance the action in the least, and its omission sensibly increases the tragic effect of the drama.

In the later version the act begins with the rejoicings of the people at the recovery of Admetus. Alcestis appears, and after vainly endeavoring to conceal her anguish from the eyes of Admetus, is forced to admit that she is the victim whose death is to restore him to life. Admetus passionately refuses the sacrifice, and declares that he will rather die with her than allow her to immolate herself on his account. He rushes wildly into the palace, and Alcestis bids farewell to life in an air of extraordinary pathos and beauty.

The third act opens with the lamentations of the people for their departed queen. Hercules, released for a moment from his labors, enters and asks for Admetus. He is horrified at the news of the calamity which has befallen his friend, and announces his resolve of rescuing Alcestis from the clutches of Death. Meanwhile Alcestis has reached the portals of the underworld, and is about to surrender herself to the powers of Hell. Admetus, who has not yet given up hope of persuading her to relinquish her purpose, appears, and pleads passionately with her to leave him to his doom. His prayers are vain, and Alcestis is tearing herself for the last time from his arms, when Hercules rushes in. After a short struggle he defeats the powers of Death and restores Alcestis to her husband.

The character of Hercules did not appear in the earlier version of the opera, and in fact was not introduced until after Gluck had left Paris, a few days after the production of *Alceste*. Most of the music allotted to him is probably not by Gluck at all, but seems to have been written by Gossec, who was at that time one of the rising musicians in Paris. The close of the opera is certainly inferior to the earlier parts, but the introduction of Hercules is a great improvement upon the original version of the last act, in which the rescue of Alcestis is effected by Apollo. The French librettist did not treat the episode cleverly, and indeed all the last scene is terribly prosaic, and lacking in poetical atmosphere.

To see how the appearance of the lusty hero in the halls of woe can heighten the tragic interest by the sheer force of contrast, we must turn to the *Alcestis* of

Euripides, where the death of Alcestis and the strange conflict of Hercules with Death are treated with just that touch of mystery and unearthliness which is absent from the libretto which Gluck was called upon to set.

Of the music of *Alceste,* its passion and intensity, it is impossible to speak too highly. It has pages of miraculous power, in which the deepest tragedy and the most poignant pathos are depicted with unfaltering certainty. It is strange to think by what simple means Gluck scaled the loftiest heights. Compared with our modern orchestra, the poverty of the resources upon which he depended seems almost ludicrous. Even in the vocal part of *Alceste* he was so careful to avoid anything like the sensuous beauty of the Italian style, that sometimes he fell into the opposite extreme and wrote merely arid rhetoric. Yet he held so consistently before him his ideal of dramatic truth, that his music has survived all changes of taste and fashion, and still delights connoisseurs as fully as on the day it was produced.

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Paride ed Elena, Gluck's next great work, shows his genius under a more lyrical aspect. Here he gives freer reign to the romanticism which he had designedly checked in *Alceste,* and much of the music seems in a measure to anticipate the new influences which Mozart was afterwards to infuse into German music. Unfortunately the libretto of *Paride ed Elena,* though possessing great poetical merit, is monotonous and defi-

cient in incident, so that the opera has never won the success which it deserves, and is now almost completely forgotten.

Iphigenia in Aulis.

Opera in three acts by Gluck. Libretto by Du Rollet.

Characters: Agamemnon; Clytemnestra, his wife; Iphigenia, their daughter; Achilles; Patroclos; Calchas, high priest; Arkas, captain of the guard of Agamemnon; Artemis (Diana).

Place, Aulis.

First produced at Paris in 1774.

The admiration for the French school of opera which had been aroused in Gluck by hearing the works of Rameau was not by any means a passing fancy. His music proves that the French school had more influence upon his development than the Italian, so it was only natural that he should wish to have an opportunity of introducing his works to Paris. That opportunity came in 1774, when, after weary months of intrigue and disappointment, his *Iphigénie en Aulide* was produced at the Académie Royale de Musique. After that time Gluck wrote all his greatest works for the French stage, and became so completely identified with the country of his adoption, that nowadays we are far more apt to think of him as a French than as a German composer. *Iphigénie en Aulide* is founded upon Racine's play, which in its turn had been derived from the tragedy of Euripides.

The scene of the opera is laid at Aulis, where the Greek fleet is prevented by contrary winds from starting for Troy. Diana, who has been unwittingly insulted by Agamemnon, demands a human sacrifice, and Iphigenia, the guiltless daughter of Agamemnon, has been named by the high priest, Calchas, as the victim. Iphigenia and her mother, Clytemnestra, are on their way to join the fleet at Aulis, and Agamemnon has sent a despairing message to bid them return home, hoping thus to avoid the necessity of sacrificing his child. Meanwhile the Greek hosts, impatient of delay, clamor for the victim, and are only appeased by the assurance of Calchas that the sacrifice shall take place that very day. Left alone with Agamemnon, Calchas entreats him to submit to the will of the gods. Agamemnon, torn by conflicting emotions, at first refuses, but afterwards, relying upon the message which he has sent to his wife and daughter, promises that if Iphigenia sets foot in Aulis he will give her up to death. He has hardly spoken the words when shouts of joy announce the arrival of Clytemnestra and Iphigenia. The message has miscarried, and they are already in the camp. As a last resource, Agamemnon now tells Clytemnestra that Achilles, the lover of her daughter, is false, hoping that this will drive her from the camp. Clytemnestra calls upon Iphigenia to thrust her betrayer from her bosom, and Iphigenia replies so heroically that it seems as though Agamemnon's plot to save his daughter's life might actually succeed. Unfortunately, Achilles himself appears, and, after a scene of reproach and recrimination, succeeds in dispelling Iphigenia's doubts and winning her to complete reconciliation.

The second act begins with the rejoicings over the marriage of Iphigenia. The general joy is turned to lamentation by the discovery of Agamemnon's vow and the impending doom of Iphigenia. Clytemnestra passionately entreats Achilles to save her daughter, which he promises to do, though Iphigenia professes herself ready to obey her father. In the following scene Achilles meets Agamemnon, and, after a long altercation, swears to defend Iphigenia with the last drop of his blood. He rushes off, and Agamemnon is left in anguish to weigh his love for his daughter against his dread of the angry gods. Love triumphs and he sends Arkas, his attendant, to bid Clytemnestra fly with Iphigenia home to Mycenæ.

In the third act the Greeks are angrily demanding their victim. Achilles prays Iphigenia to fly with him, but she is constant to her idea of duty, and bids him a pathetic farewell. Achilles, however, is not to be persuaded, and in an access of noble rage swears to slay the priest upon the steps of the altar rather than submit to the sacrifice of his love. After another farewell scene with her mother Iphigenia is led off, while Clytemnestra, seeing in imagination her daughter under the knife of the priest, bursts forth into passionate blasphemy. Achilles and his Thessalian followers rush in to save Iphigenia, and for a time the contest rages fiercely, but eighteenth-century convention steps in. Calchas stops the combat, saying that the gods are at length appeased; Iphigenia is restored to Achilles, and the opera ends with general rejoicings.

Iphigénie en Aulide gave Gluck a finer opportunity than he had yet had. The canvas is broader than in

Alceste or *Orfeo,* and the emotions are more varied. The human interest, too, is more evenly sustained, and the supernatural element, which played so important a part in the two earlier works, is almost entirely absent. Nevertheless, fine as much of the music is, the restraint which Gluck exercised over himself is too plainly perceptible, and the result is that many of the scenes are stiff and frigid. There is scarcely a trace of the delightful lyricism which rushes through *Paride ed Elena* like a flood of resistless delight. Gluck had set his ideal of perfect declamatory truth firmly before him, and he resisted every temptation to swerve into the paths of mere musical beauty. He had not yet learnt how to combine the two styles. He had not yet grasped the fact that in the noblest music truth and beauty are one and the same thing.

Armide.

Opera in five acts by Gluck. Libretto founded upon Tasso's "Jerusalem Saved," by Quinault.

Characters: Armide; Phenice and Sidonie, her confidants; Hidroat, King of Damascus; Aront, his commander-in-chief; Rinaldo, commander of the army of Godfrey of Bouillon; Artemidor, a knight; Ubaldo, a Danish knight; The Fury of Hate; Demon as Lucinda; Demon as Melissa; a Naiad.

First produced at Paris in 1777.

In *Armide,* produced in 1777, Gluck made another step forward. The libretto was the same as that used by Lulli nearly a hundred years before. The legend, already immortalized by Tasso, was strangely different

from the classical stories which had hitherto inspired his greatest works. The opening scene strikes the note of romanticism which echoes through the whole opera. Armida, a princess deeply versed in magic arts, laments that one knight, and one only, in the army of the Crusaders, has proved blind to her charms. All the rest are at her feet, but Rinaldo alone is obdurate. She has had a boding dream, moreover, in which Rinaldo has vanquished her, and all the consolations of her maidens cannot restore her peace of mind. Hidroat, her uncle, entreats her to choose a husband, but she declares that she will bestow her hand upon no one but the conqueror of Rinaldo. While the chorus is celebrating her charms, Arontes, a Paynim warrior, enters bleeding and wounded, and tells how the prowess of a single knight has robbed him of his captives. Armida at once recognizes the hand of the recalcitrant Rinaldo, and the act ends with her vows of vengeance against the invincible hero.

The second act shows Rinaldo in quest of adventures which may win him the favor of Godfrey of Bouillon, whose wrath he has incurred. Armida's enchantments lead him to her magic gardens, where, amidst scenes of voluptuous beauty, he yields to the fascinations of the place, lays downs his arms, and sinks into sleep. Armida rushes in, dagger in hand, but the sight of the sleeping hero is too potent for her, and, overcome by passion, she bids the spirits of the air transport them to the bounds of the universe. In the third act we find that Rinaldo has rejected the love of the enchantress. Armida is inconsolable; she is ashamed of her weakness, and will not listen to the well-meaning consola-

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tions of her attendants. She calls upon the spirit of Hate, but when he appears she rejects his aid, and still clings desperately to her fatal passion. The fourth act, which is entirely superfluous, is devoted to the adventures in the enchanted garden of Ubaldo, and a Danish knight, two Crusaders, who have set forth with the intention of rescuing Rinaldo from the clutches of the sorceress. The fifth act takes place in Armida's palace. Rinaldo's proud spirit has at length been subdued, and he is completely the slave of the enchantress. The duet between the lovers is of the most bewitching loveliness, and much of it curiously anticipates the romantic element which was to burst forth in a future generation. Armida tears herself from Rinaldo's arms, and leaves him to be entertained by a ballet of spirits, while she transacts some business with the powers below. Ubaldo and the Danish knight now burst in, and soon bring Rinaldo to a proper frame of mind. He takes a polite farewell of Armida, who in vain attempts to prevent his going, and is walked off by his two Mentors. Left alone, Armida calls on her demons to destroy the palace, and the opera ends in wild confusion and tumult.

To say that *Armide* recalls the romantic grace of *Paride ed Elena* is but half the truth. The lyrical grace of the earlier work is, as it were, concentrated and condensed in a series of pictures, which for voluptuous beauty surpass anything that had been written before Gluck's day. Against the background formed by the magical splendor of the enchanted garden, the figure of Armida stands out in striking relief. The mingled pride and passion of the imperious princess are drawn with wonderful art. Even while her passion brings her

to the feet of her conqueror, her haughty spirit rebels against her fate. Such weaknesses as the opera contains are principally attributable to the libretto, which is ill-constructed, and cold and formal in diction. Rinaldo is rather a colorless person, and the other characters are for the most part merely lay-figures, though the grim figure of Hate is drawn with extraordinary power. But upon Armida the composer concentrated the full lens of his genius, and for her he wrote music which satisfies every requirement of dramatic truth, without losing touch of the lyrical beauty and persuasive passion which breathes life into soulless clay.

Iphigenia in Tauris.

Opera in four acts by Gluck. Libretto from the French of Guichard by Sander.

Characters: Iphigenia, high priestess of Diana; Orestes; Pylades; Thoas, King of Scythia; Diana; first and second priestess; a Scythian; a servant of the temple.

Place, Tauris.

First produced in Paris in 1779.

In *Iphigénie en Tauride,* the last of his great works, which was produced in 1778, Gluck reached his highest point. Here he seems for the first time thoroughly to fuse and combine the two elements which are forever at war in his earlier operas, musical beauty and dramatic truth. Throughout the score of *Iphigénie en Tauride* the declamation is as vivid and true as in *Alceste,* while the intrinsic loveliness of the music yields not a jot to the passion-charged strains of *Armide.*

The overture paints the gradual wakening of a tempest, and when the storm is at its height the curtain rises upon the temple of Diana at Tauris, where Iphigenia, snatched by the goddess from the knife of the executioner at Aulis, has been placed as high priestess. The priestesses in chorus beseech the gods to be propitious, and when the fury of the storm is allayed, Iphigenia recounts her dream of Agamemnon's death, and laments the woes of her house. She calls upon Diana to put an end to her life, which already has lasted too long. Thoas, the king of the country, now enters, alarmed by the outcries of the priestesses. He is a prey to superstitious fears, and willingly listens to the advice of his followers, that the gods can only be appeased by human blood. A message is now brought that two young strangers have been cast upon the rock-bound coast, and Thoas at once decides that they shall be the victims. Orestes and Pylades are now brought in. They refuse to make themselves known, and are bidden to prepare for death, while the act closes with the savage delight of the Scythians.

The second act is in the prison. Orestes bewails his destiny, and refuses the consolation which Pylades offers in a noble and famous song. Pylades is torn from his friend's arm by the officers of the guard, and Orestes, left to himself, after a paroxysm of madness, sinks to sleep upon the prison floor. His eyes are closed, but his brain is a prey to frightful visions. The Furies surround him with horrible cries and menaces, singing a chorus of indescribable weirdness. Lastly, the shade of the murdered Clytemnestra passes before him, and he awakes with a shriek to find his cell empty

save for the mournful form of Iphigenia, who has come to question the stranger as to his origin and the purpose of his visit to Tauris. In broken accents he tells her—what is new to her ears—the tale of the murder of Agamemnon, and the vengeance taken upon Clytemnestra by himself; adding, in order to conceal his own identity, that Orestes is also dead, and that Electra is the sole remnant of the house of Atreus. Iphigenia bursts into a passionate lament, and the act ends with her offering a solemn libation to the shade of her brother.

In the third act Iphigenia resolves to free one of the victims, and to send him with a message to Electra. A sentiment which she cannot explain bids her choose Orestes, but the latter refuses to save his life at the expense of that of his friend. A contention arises between the two, which is only decided by Orestes swearing to take his own life if Pylades is sacrificed. The precious scroll is thereupon entrusted to Pylades, who departs, vowing to return and save his friend.

In the fourth act Iphigenia is a prey to conflicting emotions. A mysterious sympathy forbids her to slay the prisoner, yet she tries to steel her heart for the performance of her terrible task, and calls upon Diana to aid her. Orestes is brought on by the priestesses, and while urging Iphigenia to deal the blow, blesses her for the pity which stays her hand. Just as the knife is about to descend, the dying words of Orestes, "Was it thus thou didst perish in Aulis, Iphigenia, my sister?" bring about the inevitable recognition, and the brother and sister rush into each other's arms. But Thoas has yet to be reckoned with. He is furious at

the interruption of the sacrifice, and is about to execute summary vengeance upon both Iphigenia and Orestes, when Pylades returns with an army of Greek youths—whence he obtained them is not explained—and despatches the tyrant in the nick of time. The opera ends with the appearance of Pallas Athene, the patroness of Argos, who bids Orestes and his sister return to Greece, carrying with them the image of Diana, too long disgraced by the barbarous rites of the Scythians.

Echo et Narcisse, an opera cast in a somewhat lighter mould, which was produced in 1779, seems to have failed to please, and *Iphigénie en Tauride* may be safely taken as the climax of Gluck's career. It is the happiest example of his peculiar power, and shows more convincingly than any of its predecessors where the secret of his greatness really lay. He was the first composer who treated an opera as an integral whole. He was inferior to many of his predecessors, notably to Handel, in musical science, and even in power of characterization. But while their works were often hardly more than strings of detached scenes from which the airs might often be dissociated without much loss of effect, his operas were constructed upon a principle of dramatic unity which forbade one link to be taken from the chain without injuring the continuity of the whole.

In purely technical matters, too, his reforms were far reaching and important. He was first to make the overture in some sort a reflection of the drama which it preceded, and he used orchestral effects as a means of expressing the passion of his characters in a way that had not been dreamed of before. He dismissed the harpsichord from the orchestra, and strengthened his

band with clarinets, an instrument unknown to Handel. His banishment of *recitativo secco,* and his restoration of the chorus to its proper place in the drama were innovations of vast importance to the history of opera, but the chief strength of the influence which he exerted upon subsequent music lay in his power of suffusing each of his operas in an atmosphere special to itself.

Beginnings of Light Opera.

Opera Buffa, Opera Comique, and Singspiel.

While Gluck was altering the course of musical history in Vienna, another revolution, less grand in scope and more gradually accomplished, but scarcely less important in its results, was being effected in Italy. This was the development of opera buffa, a form of art which was destined, in Italy at any rate, to become a serious rival to the older institution of opera seria, and, in the hands of Mozart, to produce masterpieces such as the world had certainly not known before his day, nor is ever likely to see surpassed.

There is some uncertainty about the actual origin of opera buffa. A musical comedy by Vergilio Mazzocchi and Mario Marazzoli, entitled *Chi sofre speri,* was produced in Florence under the patronage of Cardinal Barberini as early as 1639. The poet Milton was present at this performance, and refers to it in one of his *Epistolæ Familiares.* In 1657 a theatre was actually built in Florence for the performance of musical comedies. For some reason, however, it did not prove a success, and after a few years was compelled to close its doors. After these first experiments there seems to have been no attempt made to resuscitate opera buffa until the rise of the Neapolitan school in the following century. The genesis of the southern branch of opera buffa may with certainty be traced to the intermezzi,

or musical interludes, which were introduced into the course of operas and dramas, probably with the object of relieving the mental strain induced by the effort of following a long serious performance.

The popularity of these intermezzi throws a curious light upon the character of Italian audiences at that time. As time went on, the proportions and general character of these intermezzi acquired greater importance, but it was not until the eighteenth century was well advanced that one of them was promoted to the rank of an independent opera, and, instead of being performed in scraps between the acts of a tragedy, was given for the first time as a separate work. This honor was accorded to Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona,* in 1734, and the great success which it met with everywhere soon caused numberless imitations to spring up, so that in a few years opera buffa in Italy was launched upon a career of triumph.

Founded as it was in avowed imitation of the tragedy of the Greeks, opera had never deigned to touch modern life at any point. For a long time the subjects of Italian operas were taken solely from classical legend, and though in time librettists were compelled to have recourse to the medieval romances, they never ventured out of an antiquity more or less remote. Thus it is easy to conceive the delight of the music-loving people of Naples when they found that the opera which they adored could be enjoyed in combination with a mirthful and even farcical story, interpreted by characters who might have stepped out of one of their own market places. But, apart from the freedom and variety of the subjects with which it dealt, the develop-

ment of opera buffa gave rise to an art form which is of the utmost importance to the history of opera—the concerted finale.

Logroscino.

Nicola Logroscino (1700-1763) seems to have been the first composer who conceived the idea of working up the end of an act to a musical climax by bringing all his characters together and blending their voices into a musical texture of some elaboration. Logroscino wrote only in the Neapolitan dialect, and his works had little success beyond the limits of his own province; but his invention was quickly adopted by all writers of opera buffa, and soon became an important factor in the development of the art. Later composers elaborated his idea by extending the finale to more than one movement, and by varying the key-color. Finally, but not until after many years, it was introduced into opera seria, when it gave birth to the idea of elaborate trios and quartets, which were afterwards to play so important a part in its development.

Pergolesi and Jomelli.

Logroscino's reputation was chiefly local, but the works of Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736) and Nicola Jomelli (1714-1774) made the Neapolitan school famous throughout Europe. Both these composers are now best known by their sacred works, but during their lives their operas attained an extraordinary degree of popularity. Both succeeded equally in

comedy and tragedy, but Jomelli's operas are now forgotten, while Pergolesi is known only by his delightful intermezzo, *La Serva Padrona.* This diverting little piece tells of the schemes of the chambermaid, Serpina, to win the hand of her master, Pandolfo. She is helped by Scapin, the valet, who, disguised as a captain, makes violent love to her, and piques the old gentleman into proposing, almost against his will. *La Serva Padrona* made the tour of Europe, and was received everywhere with tumultuous applause. In Paris it was performed in 1750, and may be said at once to have founded the school of French opéra comique. Rousseau extolled its beauty as a protest against the arid declamation of the school of Lulli, and it was the subject of one of the bitterest dissensions ever known in the history of music. But the "Guerre des Bouffons," as the struggle was called, proved one thing, which had already been satisfactorily decided in Italy, namely, that there was plenty of room in the world for serious and comic opera at the same time.

Rousseau.

There had been a kind of opéra comique in France for many years, a species of musical pantomime, which was very popular at the fairs of St. Laurent and St. Gervais. This form of entertainment scarcely came within the province of art, but it served as a starting-point for the history of opéra comique, which was afterwards so brilliant. The success of the Italian company which performed the comic operas of Pergolesi, Jomelli and others, fired the French composers to emula-

tion, and in 1753 the first French opéra comique, in the strict sense of the word, *Le Devin du Village,* by Jean Jacques Rousseau, was performed at the Académie de Musique. Musically the work is feeble and characterless, but the contrast which it offered to the stiff and serious works of the tragic composers made it upon ears too well accustomed to the pomposities of Rameau and his school.

At first lovers of opéra comique in Paris had to subsist chiefly upon translations from the Italian; but in 1755 *Ninette à la Cour,* a dainty little work written by a Neapolitan composer, Duni, to a French libretto, popular. Whatever its faults may be, it is simple and natural, and its tender little melodies fell pleasantly gained a great success. Soon afterwards, Monsigny, a composer who may well be called the father of opéra comique, produced his first work, and started upon a career of success which extended into the next century.

Monsigny.

The early days of opéra comique in Paris were distracted by the jealousy existing between the French and Italian schools, but in 1762 peace was made between the rival factions, and by process of fusion the two became one. With the opening of the new Théâtre de l'Opéra Comique—the Salle Favart, as it was then called—there began a new and brilliant period for the history of French art. It is a significant fact, and one which goes far to prove how closely the foundation of opéra comique was connected with a revolt against the boredom of grand opera, that the most successful com-

posers in the new *genre* were those who were actually innocent of any musical training whatsoever.

Pierre Alexandre Monsigny (1729-1817) is a particularly striking instance of natural genius triumphing in spite of a defective education. Nothing can exceed the thinness and poverty of his scores, or their lack of all real musical interest; yet, by the sureness of his natural instinct for the stage, he succeeded in writing music which still moves us as much by its brilliant gaiety as by its tender pathos. *Le Déserteur,* his most famous work, is a touching little story of a soldier who deserts in a fit of jealousy, and is condemned to be shot, but is saved by his sweetheart, who begs his pardon from the king. Much of the music is almost childish in its *naïveté,* but there is real pathos in the famous air, "Adieu, Louise," and some of the lighter scenes in the opera are touched off very happily.

Grétry.

The musical education of André Erneste Modeste Grétry (1741-1831) was perhaps more elaborate than that of Monsigny, but it fell very far short of profundity. His music excels in grace and humor, and he rarely treated serious subjects with success. Such works as *Le Tableau Parlant, Les Deux Avares* and *L'Amant Jaloux* are models of lightness and brilliancy, whatever may be thought of their musicianship. *Richard Cœur de Lion* is the one instance of Grétry having successfully attempted a loftier theme, and it remains his masterpiece. The scene is laid at the castle of Dürrenstein in Austria, where Richard lies imprisoned,

and deals with the efforts of his faithful minstrel, Blondel, to rescue him. In this work Grétry adapted his style to his subject with wonderful versatility. Much of the music is noble and dignified in style, and Blondel's air in particular, "O, Richard, O mon roi," has a masculine vigor which is rarely found in the composer's work. But as a rule, Grétry is happiest in his delicate little pastorals and fantastic comedies, and, for all their slightness, his works bear the test of revival better than those of many of his more learned contemporaries.

Philidor.

François André Danican-Philidor (1726-1797) was almost more famous as a chess-player than as a composer. He had the advantage of a sound musical education under Campra, one of the predecessors of Rameau, and his music has far more solid qualities than that of Grétry or Monsigny. His treatment of the orchestra, too, was more scientific than that of his contemporaries, but he had little gift of melody, and he was deficient in dramatic instinct. He often visited England, and ended by dying in London. One of the best of his works, *Tom Jones,* was written upon an English subject. Philidor was popular in his day, but his works have rarely been heard by the present generation.

With Grétry the first period of opéra comique may be said to close; indeed, the taste of French audiences had begun to change some years before the close of the eighteenth century. The mighty wave of the Revolution swept away the idle gallantries of the sham pasto-

ral, while Ossian newly discovered and Shakespeare newly translated opened the eyes of cultivated Frenchmen to the possibilities of poetry and romance. At the same time, the works of Haydn and Mozart, which had already crossed the frontier, disturbed preconceived notions about the limits of orchestral coloring, and made the thin little scores of Grétry and his contemporaries seem doubly jejune. The change in public taste was gradual, but none the less certain. The opening years of the nineteenth century saw a singular evolution, if not revolution, in the history of opéra comique.

Piccinni.

Meanwhile opera in Italy was pursuing its triumphant course. The introduction of the finale brought the two great divisions of opera into closer connection, and most of the great composers of this period succeeded as well in opera buffa as in opera seria. The impetus given to the progress of the art by the brilliant Neapolitan school was ably sustained by such composers as Nicolo Piccinni (1728-1800), a composer who is now known principally to fame as the unsuccessful rival brought forward by the Italian party in Paris in the year 1776 in the vain hope of crushing Glück. Piccinni sinks into insignificance by the side of Glück, but he was nevertheless an able composer, and certainly the leading representative of the Italian school at the time. He did much to develop the concerted finale, which before his day had been used with caution, not to say timidity, and was so constant in his devotion to the

loftiest ideal of art that he died in poverty and starvation.

Cimarosa.

In Dominico Cimarosa (1749 (1754?)-1801) we have a man of original genius. Left an orphan at the age of seven years, he was admitted a pupil at the Conservatoire of Santa Maria di Loreto at Naples. His ability soon declared itself, and on leaving the Conservatoire he was at once engaged to compose an opera for the Teatro dei Fiorentini in Naples. In 1775 he was called to Rome, and, returning to Naples, continued to produce a succession of operas, among which *Il Fanatico per gli antichi Romani,* written in 1777, was the first to contain trios and quintets carrying on the dramatic action.

His genius was everywhere in demand, and in 1789 he was induced to visit St. Petersburg. The rigors of the Russian climate proved too great for him, and in 1792 he went to Vienna, where he was most warmly received by the Emperor, who wished to attach him to his court. It was there that he produced his masterpiece, *Il Matrimonio Segreto.* Cimarosa died in Venice in 1801.

Cimarosa was a prolific writer, the number of his operas reaching the formidable total of seventy-six; but, save for *Il Matrimonio Segreto,* they have all been consigned to oblivion. Although he was born only seven years before Mozart, and actually survived him for ten years, he belongs entirely to the earlier school of opera buffa. His talent is thoroughly Italian, untouched by

German influence, and he excels in portraying the gay superficiality of the Italian character, without attempting to dive below the surface.

Il Matrimonio Segreto.

Comic opera in two acts by Dominico Cimarosa. Libretto by Bertati.

Characters: Carolina, younger daughter of Geronimo; Fidalmo, sister of Geronimo; Elisetta, elder daughter of Geronimo; Paolino, clerk; Count Robinson; Geronimo, a wealthy merchant.

Place, London, in the house of Geronimo. First produced in Florence in 1792.

The story of *Il Matrimonio Segreto* is simplicity itself, but the situations are amusing in themselves, and are led up to with no little adroitness. Paolino, a young lawyer, has secretly married Carolina, the daughter of Geronimo, a rich and avaricious merchant. In order to smooth away the difficulties which must arise when the inevitable discovery of the marriage takes place, he tries to secure a rich friend of his own, Count Robinson, for Geronimo's other daughter, Elisetta. Unfortunately, Robinson prefers Carolina, and proposes himself as son-in-law to Geronimo, who is, of course, delighted that his daughter should have secured so unexceptionable a *parti,* while the horrified Paolino discovers to his great dissatisfaction that the elderly Fidalmo, Geronimo's sister, has cast languishing eyes upon himself.

There is nothing for the young couple but flight, but unfortunately as they are making their escape they are

discovered, and their secret is soon extorted. Geronimo's wrath is tremendous, but in the end matters are satisfactorily arranged, and the amiable Robinson, after all, expresses himself content with the charms of Elisetta.

Il Matrimonio Segreto was produced at Vienna in 1792, and proved so very much to the taste of the Emperor Leopold, who was present at the performance, that he gave all the singers and musicians a magnificent supper, and then insisted upon their performing the opera again from beginning to end.

Paisiello.

Even more prolific than Cimarosa was Giovanni Paisiello (1741-1815), a composer whose works, though immensely popular in their day, did not possess individuality enough to defy the ravages of time. Paisiello deserves to be remembered as the first man to write an opera on the tale of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia.* This work, though coldly received when it was first performed, ended by establishing so firm a hold upon the affections of the Italian public, that when Rossini tried to produce his opera on the same subject, the Romans refused to give it a hearing.

Paer.

Ferdinando Paer (1771-1839) belongs chronologically to the next generation, but musically he has more in common with Paisiello than with Rossini. His principal claim to immortality rests upon the fact that a performance of his opera, *Eleanora,* inspired Beethoven with the idea of writing *Fidelio;* but although

his serious efforts are comparatively worthless, many of his comic operas are exceedingly bright and attractive. *Le Maïtre de Chapelle,* which was written to a French libretto, is still performed with tolerable frequency in Paris.

It is hardly likely that the whirligig of time will ever bring Paisiello and his contemporaries into general popularity again, but in Italy there has been of late years a remarkable revival of interest in the works of the eighteenth century. Some years ago the Argentina Theatre, in Rome, devoted its winter season almost entirely to reproductions of the works of this school. Many of these old-world little operas, whose very names had been forgotten, were received most cordially, some of them—Paisiello's *Scuffiara Raggiratrice,* for instance—with genuine enthusiasm.

The Singspiel.

Wars and rumors of wars stunted musical development of all kinds in Germany during the earlier years of the eighteenth century. After the death of Keiser, in 1739, the glory departed from Hamburg, and opera seems to have lain under a cloud until the advent of Johann Adam Hiller (1728-1804), the inventor of the Singspiel. Hiller's Singspiele were vaudevilles of a simple and humorous description, interspersed with music, occasionally concerted numbers of a very simple description, but more often songs derived directly from the traditions of the German Lied. These operettas were very popular, as the frequent editions of them which were called for prove.

Yet, in spite of their success, it was felt by many of the composers who imitated him that the combination of dialogue and music was inartistic, and Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814) attempted to solve the difficulty by relegating the music to a merely incidental position and conducting all the action of the piece by means of the dialogue. Nevertheless the older form of the Singspiel retained its popularity, and although founded upon incorrect æsthetic principles—for no art, however ingenious, can fuse the convention of speech and the convention of song into an harmonious whole—was the means in later times of giving to the world, in "Die Zauberflöte" and "Fidelio," nobler music than had yet been consecrated to the service of the stage.

Mozart.

His Career and Operatic Masterpieces.

Johann Chrysostom Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in 1756 at Salzburg, when Haydn was already twenty-four years of age. He died in 1791, eighteen years before the elder musician, to the eternal loss of musical art. At the very earliest age the child showed his marvellous capacity, and fortunately his father, a man of sense and a good musician, was well able to direct his studies, which, indeed, wanted but little direction. The elder Mozart was court musician, and afterwards vice-capellmeister at the court of the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg. Of his numerous family two only grew up, Nannerl (Maria Ann), born in 1751, and the great composer. Both children showed great musical ability, but the genius of the little Wolfgang was most precocious. At the age of three he would pick out thirds on the harpsichord, and try to imitate what his sister played. In his fifth year he began to compose little pieces, which his father wrote down in a book fortunately preserved. In addition to the harpsichord, he learned the violin, and the progress of both children was so rapid that their father decided on taking them on a tour. In January, 1762, they arrived in Vienna. The boy was most engaging, both in appearance and manner, and remained perfectly natural and unspoiled. The tour was a brilliant success. Everywhere they were received with delight, especially by the

Imperial family, and both the Empress Maria Theresa and her husband Francis I were excellent musicians.

In June, 1763, Leopold Mozart with difficulty again got leave of absence and started with his children for Paris, visiting the German courts on the road. Paris was not reached till November 18th. Grimm, the well-known *littérateur*, was their good friend, arranging concerts and introducing them at Court, where the children were received with the greatest kindness and admiration. Here the boy's first work was published, four sonatas for harpsichord and violin. *"par J. C. Wolfgang Mozart de Salzburg agé de sept ans."* It was decided to continue the journey to London, where they arrived on April 23d, 1764. In a few days they were summoned to Buckingham House, and had no reason to be dissatisfied with their reception. "We have met with extraordinary politeness at every Court, but what we have experienced here surpasses all the rest," writes the father.

Space fails to give particulars of all the travels of this remarkable family. The year 1768 found them again in Vienna, where, at the Emperor's suggestion, Wolfgang wrote his first opera, *La Finta Semplice.* Owing to intrigues it was not performed there, but was brought out the following year at Salzburg at the instance of the Archbishop, who appointed the young composer concert-meister. Meanwhile Mozart's studies continued, Fux's *Gradus* forming his text-book. But a visit to Italy was looked on as a part of the education of every musician, and in December, 1769, Leopold Mozart and his son set forth. It was a triumphal progress. At Bologna he was received with open arms by the Padre

Martini, a prodigy of musical learning, who put him through every test, and subsequently he was made a *compositore* of the Accademia Filarmonica of that city. They reached Rome in Holy Week, and at once went to the Sistine Chapel to hear the famous *Miserere* of Allegri, the music of which was held in such esteem that the Papal singers were forbidden to take any copy out of the Chapel under pain of excommunication. This elaborate work, as we have already mentioned, the boy of fourteen wrote out entirely from memory, taking his copy on Good Friday, that he might correct it by a second hearing. For Milan he wrote an opera, *Mitridate,* produced in December, 1770, with the greatest success.

In March, 1772, the Archbishop of Salzburg died. He was succeeded by Hieronymous, Count Colleredo, who appears to have done all he could to vex and offend his young concert-meister, whose transcendent abilities he was incapable of appreciating. This studied neglect made him endeavor to obtain a position elsewhere. Successes achieved by his operas both in Milan and Munich served only to set the Archbishop still more against him. The circumstances of the Mozart family were straitened, and the greatest composer of the age was asking only for such a modest position as would enable him to bring to a hearing the works which he knew were floating in his brain. There was no other course than to resume his career of traveling virtuoso, and he started once again for Paris, this time accompanied by his mother. The journey was the cause of much unhappiness. During his stay in Paris his mother died.

At Mannheim he made the acquaintance of the Weber family, and with the eldest daughter, Aloysia, a young singer of great beauty and ability, he fell in love. The attachment was mutual, but on his return he found that her feelings for him had changed. She subsequently married the actor Lange. An air which Mozart wrote for her shows how great a singer she must have been. During his absence he had been appointed organist to the Archbishop, and in deference to his father's wishes he returned to take up his appointment; but his position soon became unbearable, and a complete rupture took place. His ruffled feelings were soothed by the reception of his opera *Idomeneo* at Munich, in 1781. With this opera began the splendor of Mozart's career.

The break with the Archbishop occurred in Vienna, whither he had repaired to congratulate the Emperor Joseph on his succession. It was necessary for Mozart at once to find lodgings. Madame Weber, now a widow, was living in Vienna in needy circumstances, drawn there by the engagement of her eldest daughter Aloysia, now Madame Lange, as principal singer at the National Theatre. With the Weber family Mozart took up his abode. Leopold Mozart at once took fright, and desired him to find other lodgings, in spite of his protests that matrimony was the farthest thing from his thoughts. During the early part of his residence in Vienna he was principally known as a pianist. The Emperor Joseph received him with great cordiality, but his sympathies were with the Italian musicians, who had obtained a strong footing at the Austrian Court. Mozart was in much request as a teacher, and among others the Baroness Waldstätten and Countess Thun, who had also

studied with Haydn, became his pupils. By the musicians he was received with jealousy, except by Haydn, who always showed an unaffected admiration for his genius.

At last he was commissioned by the Emperor to compose the music for the libretto of the *Entführung aus dem Serail,* but owing to the cabals of his rivals—principally Salieri—it was not produced till July 16th, 1782. The success of the work was triumphant, although the Emperor expressed the opinion that it was "too fine for our ears, my dear Mozart,—too many notes!" to which the composer replied: "Exactly as many notes as are necessary, your Majesty."

During the progress of the opera his intimacy with the Webers had been ripening, and it ended in a mutual attachment between Mozart and the youngest daughter, Constance. The elder Mozart withheld his consent, nor was the attitude taken by Madame Weber much more propitious, while her ill-temper made Constance's life almost unbearable. A friend appeared in the person of Baroness Waldstätten, who took the girl into her own house, and by her good offices the lovers were united on August 4th, 1782. To complete Mozart's happiness, a letter of consent from his father arrived the following day. To Constance, Mozart was sincerely attached, and continued to be so. She played the pianoforte fairly well, and was a good singer, especially at sight. Unfortunately she soon became delicate, and, although not extravagant, did not shine as a domestic manager, so that household cares weighed heavily on Mozart for the rest of his life.

And now he entered on a period of the greatest activ-

ity as a composer. In the year 1784 Mozart began to keep a catalogue of his compositions as they were produced. It is a catalogue of masterpieces. In the early part of 1786 we find the music to the comedy *Der Schauspiel Director* followed in April of the same year by *Le Nozze di Figaro.* Strange to say, the effect produced by this masterpiece was comparatively small, and it was only when brought out at Prague in the following year that it was received with the enthusiasm it deserved.

So pleased was the composer at this result that he exclaimed, "The Bohemians understand me so well I must write an opera for them!" The result was his masterpiece, *Don Giovanni.* In September, 1787, he repaired to Prague, accompanied by his wife, with a view to composing his opera on the spot. The whole was laid out in his mind, but as yet not a note committed to paper. The work was carried on in a garden house in the suburbs belonging to his friend Duschek, a musician. It was much frequented by his acquaintances, who were in the habit of enjoying a game of bowls in the garden. Amid this scene of merriment the work was carried on, the composer frequently breaking off to take his turn in the game.

The opera was produced on October 29th, 1787. On the previous evening the overture had not been written. At his request his wife made him a glass of punch, and told him fairy tales to keep him awake while he composed his overture. As soon as she stopped talking he became drowsy, and she, therefore, persuaded him to take some rest, awaking him at five o'clock. He had ordered the copyists to come at seven, and by that time the over-

ture was finished. The parts were copied during the day, and the overture played without rehearsal at night amid a scene of tumultuous applause, which continued as number after number added to the delight of the audience. Prague once again showed its thorough appreciation of the master.

At Vienna its reception was less enthusiastic—the Viennese found the music too learned for their taste, but even there its beauties gradually made their way. The dramatic power of the music, its wealth of melody, form the delight of all who have an ear for "sweet sounds," while the learned contrivance displayed is the wonder and admiration of the musician.

The year 1790 saw the production of the opera *Cosi fan tutte,* the libretto of which was not to his taste, so that the work hardly rises to his standard of excellence. We now come to the last year of the great musician's life. To help his friend Schickaneder, director of a theatre in Vienna, out of a pecuniary difficulty, he undertook to write for him a German opera, *Die Zauberflöte.*

The health of Mozart was now giving way. During the composition of the opera he received the visit of a mysterious stranger, who handed him an anonymous letter asking the sum he would require for the composition of a requiem, and the time necessary to execute the commission. It is now ascertained that the mysterious stranger was the steward of Count Franz von Walsegg, that the requiem was for his wife, and that he was desirous of passing himself off as the composer, as he had done before with other works similarly commissioned. But Mozart was weakened by illness, and

could not rid himself of the idea that the messenger was supernatural, and the requiem intended for his own death.

In the meantime he was called upon to compose an opera, *La Clemenza di Tito,* by the Bohemian nobles, to celebrate the coronation of the Emperor Leopold II. Well disposed as the inhabitants of Prague were to Mozart, the work, written against time, was received with coldness, and he returned to Vienna, sick in mind and body, to set to work again on *Die Zauberflöte* and the requiem. The opera was brought out with unbounded success. He now set to work on the requiem, more than ever confirmed in the idea that it was for himself.

Full of gloomy fancies, he became convinced that he was poisoned. On November 21st he took to his bed, from which he never rose again. The requiem lay constantly on his bed, and his young friend Süssmayer, who had assisted him in the composition of *La Clemenza,* received his instructions as to the filling up of the score. At two o'clock on the fourth of December, some friends who were visiting him sang through the score, he himself being able to take the alto part. On arriving at the "Lacrymosa" he burst into tears and laid down the music. Towards evening it was evident that death was near, and at one o'clock in the morning of December 5th the great musician ceased to breathe. Then only did the Viennese find out what a loss they had sustained.

Mozart had barely completed his thirty-sixth year, but the number of his compositions was enormous. The excellent catalogue drawn up by Von Köchel contains

six hundred and twenty-six works, in addition to those which were unfinished. Among them are many works of the highest genius. Perhaps his greatness was most fully shown in his operatic work, but in all forms of composition he excelled.

Mozart's Operas.

La Finta Simplice is, of course, an extraordinary work when we take into account that the composer was only twelve years of age, but intrinsically it differs little from the thousand and one comic operas of the period. Mozart's first German opera, *Bastien und Bastienne,* though written after *La Finta Simplice,* was performed before it. It was given in 1768 in a private theatre belonging to Dr. Anton Meszmer, a rich Viennese bourgeois. It follows the lines of Hiller's Singspiele closely, but shows more originality, especially in the orchestration, than *La Finta Semplice.* The plot of the little work is an imitation of Rousseau's *Devin du Village,* telling of the quarrels of a rustic couple, and their reconciliation through the good offices of a traveling conjurer. It was significant that the Italian and German schools should be respectively represented in the two infant works of the man who was afterwards to fuse the special beauties of each in works of immortal loveliness.

Mozart's next four operas were, for the most part, hastily written—*Mitridate, Re di Ponto* (1770) and *Lucio Silla* (1775) for Milan, *La Finta Giardiniera* (1775) for Munich, and *Il Re Pastore* (1775) for Salzburg. They adhere pretty closely to the conven-

tional forms of the day, and, in spite of the beauty of many of the airs, can scarcely be said to contain much evidence of Mozart's incomparable genius.

The period of Mozart's visit to Paris, in 1778, may be looked upon as the turning-point in his operatic career. In Paris he heard the operas of Glück and Grétry, besides those of the Italian composers, such as Piccinni and Sacchini, whose best works were written for the French stage. He studied their scores carefully, and from them he learned the principles of orchestration, which he was afterwards to turn into such account in *Don Giovanni* and *Die Zauberflöte.*

The result of his studies was plainly visible in *Idomeneo,* the first work which he produced after his return to Germany.

Idomeneo.

Opera in three acts by Mozart. Libretto by Giambattista Varesco.

Characters: Idomeneo, King of Crete; Idamantes, his son; Ilia, daughter of King Priam; Arbaces, counsellor of the King; High Priest.

Place, Crete. Time, shortly after the conclusion of the Trojan war. First produced at Munich in 1781.

The libretto of Idomeneo, by the Abbé Giambattista Varesco, was modelled upon an earlier French work which had already been set to music by Campra. Idomeneo, King of Crete, on his way home from the siege of Troy, is overtaken by a terriffic storm. In despair of his life, he vows that, should he reach the shore alive, he will sacrifice the first human being he meets to Neptune. This proves to be his son, Idamante,

who has been reigning in his stead during his absence. When he finds out who the victim is—for at first he does not recognize him—he tries to evade his vow by sending Idamante away to foreign lands.

Electra, the daughter of Agamemnon, driven from her country after the murder of her mother, has taken refuge in Crete, and Idomeneo bids his son return with her to Argos, and ascend the throne of the Atreidæ. Idamante loves Ilia, the daughter of Priam, who has been sent to Crete some time before as a prisoner from Troy, and is loved by her in return. Nevertheless, he bows to his father's will, and is preparing to embark with Electra, when a storm arises, and a frightful sea monster issues from the waves and proceeds to devastate the land. The terror-stricken people demand that the victim shall be produced, and Idomeneo is compelled to confess that he has doomed his son to destruction.

All are overcome with horror, but the priests begin to prepare for the sacrifice. Suddenly cries of joy are heard, and Idamante, who has slain the monster single-handed, is brought in by the priests and people. He is ready to die, and his father is preparing to strike the fatal blow, when Ilia rushes in and entreats to be allowed to die in his place. The lovers are still pleading anxiously with each other when a subterranean noise is heard, the statue of Neptune rocks, and a solemn voice pronounces the will of the gods in majestic accents. Idomeneo is to renounce the throne, and Idamante is to marry Ilia and reign in his stead. Every one except Electra is vastly relieved, and the opera ends with dances and rejoicings.

The music of *Idomeneo* is cast for the most part in Italian form, though the influence of Glück is obvious in many points, particularly in the scene of the oracle. Here we find Mozart in his maturity for the first time. He has become a man, and put away childish things. In two points *Idomeneo* is superior to any opera that had previously been written—in the concerted music (the choruses as well as the trios and quartets), and in the instrumentation. The chorus is prompted from the part which it usually plays in Glück, that of a passive spectator. It joins in the drama, and takes an active part in the development of the plot, and the music which it is called upon to sing is often finer and more truly dramatic than that alloted to the solo singers. But the chorus had already been used effectively by Glück and other composers.

It is in his solo concerted music that Mozart forges ahead of all possible rivals. The power which he shows of contrasting the conflicting emotions of his characters in elaborate concerted movements was something really new to the stage. The one quartet in Handel's *Radamisto* and the one trio in his *Alcina,* magnificent as they are, are too exceptional in their occurrence to be quoted as instances, while the attempts of Rameau and his followers to impose dramatic significance into their concerted music, though technically interesting, do but faintly foreshadow the glory of Mozart. The orchestration of *Idomeneo,* too, is something of the nature of a revelation. At Munich, Mozart had at his disposal an excellent and well-trained band, and this may go far to explain the elaborate care which he bestowed upon the instrumental side of his opera.

The coloring of the score is sublime in conception and brilliant in detail. Even now it well repays the closest and most intimate study. *Idomeneo* is practically the foundation of all modern orchestration.

The Abduction from the Seraglio.

Comic opera in three acts by Mozart. Libretto by Brentzner and Stephanie.

Characters: Selim Bassa; Konstanze; Blöndchen, her servant; Belmonte; Pedrillo, his servant; Osmin, overseer of the country house of the Bassa.

Place, the country house of Bassa. Time, sixteenth century. First produced in 1782 at the National Theatre of Vienna.

It has already been pointed out that the first two works which Mozart, as a child, wrote for the stage, followed respectively the Italian and German models. Similarly, he signalized his arrival at the full maturity of his powers by producing an Italian and German masterpiece side by side. *Die Entführing aus dem Serail* was written for the Court Theatre at Vienna, in response to a special command of the Emperor Joseph II. It was produced on July 13, 1782. The original libretto was the work of C. F. Brentzner, but was rewritten by Stephanie at the request of Mozart. Mozart, however, introduced so many alterations and improvements into the fabric of the story that, as it stands, much of it is practically his own work.

The Pasha Selim has carried off a Christian damsel named Constanze, whom he keeps in close confinement

in his seraglio, in the hope that she may consent to be his wife. Belmont, Constanze's lover, has traced her to the Pasha's country house with the assistance of Pedrillo, a former servant of his own, now the Pasha's slave and chief gardener. Belmont's attempts to enter the house are frustrated by Osmin, the surly major-domo. At last, however, through the good offices of Pedrillo, he contrives to gain admission in the character of an architect. Osmin has a special motive for disliking Pedrillo, who has forestalled him in the affections of Blöndchen, Constanze's maid. Nevertheless, he is beguiled by the wily servant into a drinking bout, and quieted with a harmless narcotic. This gives the lovers an opportunity for an interview in which the details of their flight are arranged.

The next night they make their escape. Belmont gets off safely with Constanze, but Pedrillo and Blöndchen are seen by Osmin before they are clear of the house. The hue and cry is raised, and both couples are caught and brought back. They are all condemned to death, but the soft-hearted Pasha is so much overcome by their fidelity and self-sacrifice that he pardons them and sends them away in happiness.

Much of *Die Entführung* is so thoroughly and characteristically German, that at first sight it may be thought surprising that it should have succeeded so well in a city like Vienna, which was inclined to look upon the Singspiel as a barbarian product of Northern Germany. But there is a reason for this, and it is one which goes to the root of the whole question of comic opera. Mozart saw that Italian comic operas often succeeded in spite of miserable libretti, because the entire interest was con-

centrated upon the music, and all the rest was forgotten. The German Singspiel writers made the mistake of letting their music be, for the most part, merely incidental, and conducting all the dramatic part of their plots by dialogue. Mozart borrowed the underlying idea of the opera buffa, applied it to the form of the Singspiel, which he kept intact, and produced a work which succeeded in revolutionizing the history of German opera.

But, apart from the question of form, the music of *Die Entführung* is in itself fine enough to be the foundation even of so imposing a structure as modern German music. The orchestral forces at Mozart's disposal were on a smaller scale than at Munich; but though less elaborate than that of *Idomeneo,* the score of *Die Entführung* is full of the tenderest and purest imagination.

The real importance of the work lies in the vivid power of characterization, which Mozart here reveals for the first time in full maturity. It is by the extraordinary development of this quality that he transcends all other writers for the stage before or since. It is no exaggeration to say that Mozart's music reveals the inmost soul of the characters of his opera as plainly as if they were discussed upon a printed page. In his later works the opportunities given him of proving this magical power were more frequent and better. The libretto of *Die Entführung* is a poor affair at best, but, considering the materials with which he had to work, Mozart never accomplished truer or more delicate work than in the music of Belmont and Constanze, of Pedrillo, and the greatest of all, of Osmin.

Der Schauspieldirektor.

Der Schauspieldirektor is a one-act comedy describing the struggles of two rival singers for an engagement. A sparkling overture and a genuinely comic trio are the best numbers of the score; but the libretto gave Mozart little opportunity of exercising his peculiar talents. Since his original production various attempts have been made to fit *Der Schauspieldirektor* with new and more effective libretti, but in no case has its performance attained any real success.

L'Oie du Caïre.

For the sake of completeness it may be well to mention the existence of a comic opera entitled *L'Oie du Caïre,* which is an exceedingly clever combination of the fragments left by Mozart of two unfinished operas, *L'Oca del Cairo* and *Lo Sposo Deluso,* fitted to a new and original libretto by the late M. Victor Wilder. In its modern form, this little opera, in which a lover is introduced into his mistress' garden inside an enormous goose, has been successfully performed both in France and England and other countries.

The Marriage of Figaro.

Comic opera in four acts by Mozart. Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte, founded upon the comedy of Beaumarchais.

Characters: Count Almaviva; the Countess, his wife; Figaro, valet to the Count; Susanna, his bride;

Cherubino, page to the Count; Marzelline, housekeeper; Bartholdi, physician; Basilio, music master; Don Guzman, judge; Antonio, gardener to the Court; Barbarina, his daughter.

Place, Spain. First produced at Vienna in 1786.

Not even the success of *Die Entführung* could permanently establish German opera in Vienna. The musical sympathies of the aristocracy were entirely Italian, and Mozart had to bow to expediency. *Le Nozze di Figaro* was written to an adaptation of Beaumarchais's famous comedy *Le Mariage de Figaro,* which had been produced in Paris a few years before. This opera may be said to be the continuation of Rossini's *Barbiere di Seviglia.* Da Ponte, the librettist, wisely omitted all the political references, which contributed so much to the popularity of the original play, and left only a bustling comedy of intrigue, not perhaps very moral in tendency, but full of amusing incident and unflagging in spirit. It speaks volumes for the ingenuity of the librettist that though the imbroglio is often exceedingly complicated, no one feels the least difficulty in following every detail of it on the stage, though it is by no means easy to give a clear and comprehensive account of all the ramifications of the plot.

The scene is laid at the country-house of Count Almaviva. Figaro, the Count's valet, and Susanna, the Countess's maid, are to be married that day; but Figaro, who is well aware that the Count has a penchant for his *fiancée,* is on his guard against machinations in that quarter. The page, Cherubino, is an ardent youth who is devotedly attached to his mistress. He has been caught by the Count flirting with Barbarina, the gar-

dener's daughter, and promptly dismissed from his service, and now he comes to Susanna to entreat her to intercede for him with the Countess. While the two are talking they hear the Count approaching, and Susanna hastily hides Cherubino behind a large arm-chair. The Count comes to offer Susanna a dowry if she will consent to meet him that evening, but she will have nothing to say to him. Basilio, the music-master, now enters, and the Count has only just time to slip behind Cherubino's arm-chair while the page creeps round to the front of it, and is covered by Susanna with a cloak. Basilio, while repeating the Count's proposals, refers to Cherubino's passion for the Countess. This arouses the Count, who comes forward in a fury, orders the immediate dismissal of the page, and by the merest accident discovers the unlucky youth ensconced in the arm-chair.

As Cherubino has heard every word of the interview, the first thing to do is to get him out of the way. The Count, therefore, presents him with a commission in his own regiment, and bids him pack off to Seville post-haste. Figaro now appears with all the villagers in holiday attire to ask the Count to honor his marriage by giving the bride away. The Count cannot refuse, but postpones the ceremony for a few hours in the hope of gaining time to prosecute his suit. Meanwhile the Countess, Susanna, and Figaro are maturing a plot of their own to discomfit the Count and bring him back to the feet of his wife. Figaro writes an anonymous letter to the Count, telling him that the Countess has made an assignation with a stranger for that evening in the garden, hoping by this means to arouse his jealousy

and divert his mind from the wedding. He assures him also of Susanna's intention to keep her appointment in the garden, intending that Cherubino, who has been allowed to put off his departure, shall be dressed up as a girl and take Susanna's place at the interview.

The page comes to the Countess's room to be dressed, when suddenly the conspirators hear the Count approaching. Cherubino is hastily locked in an inner room, while Susanna slips into an alcove. While the Count is plying his wife with angry questions, Cherubino clumsily knocks over a chair. The Count hears the noise, and quickly jumps to the conclusion that the page is hiding in the inner room. The Countess denies everything and refuses to give up the key, whereupon the Count drags her off with him to get an axe to break in the door. Meanwhile Susanna liberates Cherubino, and takes his place in the inner room, while the latter escapes by jumping down into the garden. When the Count finally opens the door and discovers only Susanna within, his rage is turned to mortification, and he is forced to sue for pardon.

The Countess is triumphant, but a change is given to the position of affairs by the appearance of Antonio, the gardener, who comes to complain that his flowers have been destroyed by someone jumping on them from the window. The Count's jealous fears are returning, but Figaro allays them by declaring that he is the culprit, and that he made his escape by the window in order to avoid the Count's anger. Antonio then produces a paper which he found dropped among the flowers. This proves to be Cherubino's commission. Once more the secret is nearly out, but Figaro saves the

situation by declaring that the page gave it to him to get the seal affixed. The Countess and Susanna are beginning to congratulate themselves on their escape, when another diversion is created by the entrance of Marcellina, the Countess's old duenna, and Bartolo, her ex-guardian. Marcellina has received a promise in writing from Figaro that he will marry her if he fails to pay a sum of money which he owes her by a certain date, and she comes to claim her bridegroom. The Count is delighted at this new development, and promises Marcellina that she shall get her rights.

The second act (according to the original arrangement) is mainly devoted to clearing up the various difficulties. Figaro turns out to be the long-lost son of Marcellina and Bartolo, so the great impediment to his marriage is effectually removed, and by the happy plan of a disguise the Countess takes Susanna's place at the assignation, and receives the ardent declarations of her husband. When the Count discovers his mistake he is thoroughly ashamed of himself, and his vows of amendment bring the piece to a happy conclusion.

It seems hardly possible to write critically of the music of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Mozart had in a superabundant degree that power which is characteristic of our greatest novelists, of infusing the breath of life into his characters. We rise from seeing a performance of *Le Nozze* with no consciousness of the art employed, but with a feeling of having assisted in an actual scene in real life. It is not until afterwards that the knowledge is forced upon us that this convincing presentment of nature is the result of a combination of the purest inspiration of genius with the highest develop-

ment of art. Mozart knew everything that was to be known about music, and *Le Nozze di Figaro,* in spite of its supreme and unapproachable beauty, is really only the legitimate outcome of two centuries of steady development. Perhaps the most striking feature of the work is the absolute consistency of the whole. In spite of the art with which the composer has individualized his characters, there is no clashing between the different types of music allotted to each.

As for the music itself, if the exuberant youthfulness of *Die Entführung* has been toned down to a serener flow of courtliness, we are compensated for the loss by the absence of the mere *bravura* which disfigures many of the airs in the earlier work. The dominant characteristic of the music is that wise and tender sympathy with the follies and frailties of mankind, which moves us with a deeper pathos than the most terrific tragedy ever penned. It is perhaps the highest achievement of the all-embracing genius of Mozart that he made an artificial comedy of intrigue, which is trivial when it is not squalid, into one of the great music dramas of the world.

Don Giovanni.

Opera in two acts by Mozart. Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte.

Characters: Don Giovanni; Don Pedro; Donna Anna, his daughter; Don Ottavio, her betrothed; Donna Elvira; Leporello, servant to Don Juan; Masetto, a peasant; Zerline, his betrothed.

Place, Seville. Time, seventeenth century. First produced at Prague in 1787.

Don Giovanni was written for Prague, a city which had always shown Mozart more real appreciation than Vienna. It was adapted by Da Ponte from a Spanish tale which had already been utilized by Molière. Although, so far as incident goes, it is not perhaps an ideal libretto, it certainly contains many of the elements of success. The characters are strongly marked and distinct, and the supernatural part of the story, which appealed particularly to Mozart's imagination and, indeed, determined him to undertake the opera, is managed with consummate skill.

Don Giovanni, a licentious Spanish nobleman, who is attracted by the charms of Donna Anna, the daughter of the Commandant of Seville, breaks into her palace under cover of night, in the hope of making her his own. She resists him and calls for help. In the struggle which ensues the Commandant is killed by Don Giovanni, who escapes unrecognized. Donna Elvira, his deserted wife, has pursued him to Seville, but he employs his servant Leporello to occupy her attention while he pays court to Zerlina, a peasant girl, who is about to marry an honest clodhopper named Masetto. Donna Anna now recognizes Don Giovanni as her father's assassin, and communicates her discovery to her lover, Don Ottavio; Elvira joins them, and the three vow vengeance against the libertine. Don Giovanni gives a ball in honor of Zerlina's marriage, and in the course of the festivities seizes an opportunity of trying to seduce her. He is only stopped by the interference of Anna, Elvira and Ottavio, who have made their way into his palace in masks and dominoes.

In the next act the vengeance of the three conspira-

tors appears to hang fire a little, for Don Giovanni is still pursuing his vicious courses, and employing Leporello to beguile the too trustful Elvira. After various escapades he find himself before the statue of the murdered Commandant. He jokingly invites his old antagonist to sup with him, an invitation which the statue, to his intense surprise, hastens to accept. Leporello and his master return to prepare for the entertainment of the evening. When the merriment is at its height, a heavy step in heard in the corridor, and the marble man enters. Don Giovanni is still undaunted, and even when his terrible visitor offers him the choice between repentance and damnation, yields not a jot of his pride and insolence. Finally the statue grasps him by the hand and drags him down, amid flames and earthquakes, to eternal torment.

The taste of Mozart's time would not permit the drama to finish here. All the other characters have to assemble once more. Leporello gives them an animated description of his master's destruction, and they proceed to draw a most edifying moral from the doom of the sinner. The music to this finale is of matchless beauty and interest, but modern sentiment will not hear of so grievous an anti-climax, and the opera now usually ends with Don Giovanni's disappearance.

The music of *Don Giovanni* has so often been discussed, that brief reference to its more salient features will be all that is necessary. Gounod has written of it: "The score of *Don Giovanni* has inflenced my life like a revelation. It stands in my thoughts as an imcarnation of dramatic and musical impeccability," and lesser men will be content to echo his words. The plot is less

dramatically coherent than that of *Le Nozze di Figaro,* but it ranges over a far wider gamut of human feeling. From the comic rascality of Leporello to the unearthly terrors of the closing scene is a vast step, but Mozart is equally at home in both. His incomparable art of characterization is here displayed in even more consummate perfection than in the earlier work.

The masterly way in which he differentiates the natures of his three soprani—Anna, a type of noble purity; Elvira, a loving and long-suffering woman, alternating between jealous indignation and voluptuous tenderness; and Zerlina, a model of rustic coquetry—may especially be remarked, but all the characters are treated with the same profound knowledge of life and human nature. Even in his most complicated concerted pieces he never loses grip of the idiosyncrasies of his characters, and in the most piteous and tragic situations he never relinquishes for a moment his pure ideal of intrinsic musical beauty. If there be such a thing as immortality for any work of art, it must surely be conceded to *Don Giovanni.*

Cosi Fan Tutte.

Comic opera in two acts by Mozart. Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte.

Characters: Fiordiligi; Dorabella, her sister; Ferrando, officer; Guglielmo, officer; Alfonso, bachelor; Despina, maid.

Place, Naples. Time, eighteenth century. First produced at Vienna in 1790.

Cosi fan tutte has never been so successful as its two predecessors. This is chiefly due to its libretto, which, though a brisk little comedy of intrigue, is almost too slight to bear a musical setting. The plot turns upon a wager laid by two young officers with an old cynic of their acquaintance to prove the constancy of their respective sweethearts. After a touching leavetaking they return disguised as Albanians and proceed to make violent love each one to the other's *financée.* The ladies at first resist the ardent strangers, but end by giving way, and the last scene shows their repentance and humiliation when they discover that the two attractive foreigners are their own lovers after all There is much delightful music in the work, and it is greatly to be regretted that it should have been so completely cast into the shade by *Le Nozze di Figaro.*

La Clemenza di Tito.

Opera in two acts by Mozart. Libretto by Caterino Mazzola. Adapted from Pietro Metastasio.

Characters: Titus Vespasianus, Roman Emperor; Vitellia, daughter of Vitellius; Titus Sextus, friend of Titus; Servillia, sister of Sextus; Annius, friend of Sextus; Plubius, leader of the Praetoriæ.

Place, Rome. Time, first century. Produced at Prague in 1791.

La Clemenza di Tito was hastily written while Mozart was suffering from the illness which in the end proved fatal. The libretto was an adaptation of an earlier work by Metastasio. Cold and formal, and almost

totally devoid of dramatic interest, it naturally failed to inspire the composer. The form in which it was cast compelled him to return to the conventions of opera seria, from which he had long escaped, and altogether, as an able critic remarked at the time, the work might rather be taken for the first attempt of budding talent than for the product of a mature mind.

The story deals with the plotting of Vitellia, the daughter of the deposed Vitellius, to overthrow the Emperor Titus. She persuades her lover, Sextus, to conspire against his friend, and he succeeds in setting the Capitol on fire. Titus, however, escapes by means of a disguise, and not only pardons all the conspirators, but rewards Vitellia with his hand. The opera was produced at Prague on the sixth of September, 1791, and the cold reception which it experienced did much to embitter the closing years of Mozart's life.

The Magic Flute.

Opera in two acts by Mozart. Libretto by Schickaneder. Adapted from a tale by Wieland.

Characters: Sarastro; Tamino; speaker; two priests; the Queen of the Night; Pamina, her daughter; three ladies; three boys; Papageno; Papagena; Monostatos, a Moor.

Place, Egypt. First produced at Vienna in 1791.

Die Zauberflöte, Mozart's last work, was written before *La Clemenza di Tito,* though not actually produced until September 30, 1791. The libretto, which was the work of Emanuel Schikaneder, is surely the

most extraordinary that ever mortal composer was called upon to set.

At the opening of the opera the Prince Tamino rushes in, pursued by a monstrous serpent, and sinks exhausted on the steps of a temple, from which three ladies issue in the nick of time and despatch the serpent with their silver spears. They give Tamino a portrait of Pamina, the daughter of their mistress, the Queen of Night, which immediately inspires him with passionate devotion. He is informed that Pamina has been stolen by Sarastro, the high priest of Isis, and imprisoneed by him in his palace. He vows to rescue her, and for that purpose is presented by the ladies with a magic flute, which will keep him safe in every danger, while Papageno, a bird catcher, who has been assigned to him as companion, receives a glockenspiel. Three genii are summoned to guide them, and the two champions thereupon proceed to Sarastro's palace.

Tamino is refused admittance by the doorkeeper, but Papageno in some unexplained way contrives to get in, and persuades Pamina to escape with him. They fly, but are recaptured by Monostatos, a Moor, who has beeen appointed to keep watch over Pamina. Sarastro now appears, condemns Monostatos to the bastinado, and decrees that the two lovers shall undergo a period of probation in the sanctuary. In the second act the ordeal of silence is imposed upon Tamino. Pamina cannot understand his apparent coldness, and is inclined to listen to the counsels of her mother, who tries to induce her to murder Sarastro. The priest, however, convinces her of his beneficent intentions. The lovers go through the ordeals of fire

and water successfully, and are happily married. The Queen of Night and her dark kingdom perish everlastingly, and the reign of peace and wisdom is universally established. The humors of Papageno in his search for a wife have nothing to do with the principal interest of the plot, but they serve as an acceptable contrast to the more serious scenes of the opera.

The libretto of the *Die Zauberflöte* is usually spoken of as the climax of conceivable inanity, but the explanation of many of its absurdities seems to lie in the fact that it is an allegorical illustration of the struggles and final triumph of Freemasonry. Both Mozart and Schikaneder were Freemasons, and *Die Zauberflöte* is in a sense a manifesto of their belief. Freemasonry in the opera is represented by the mysteries of Isis, over which the high-priest Sarastro presides. The Queen of Night is Maria Theresa, a sworn opponent of Freemasonry, who interdicted its practice throughout her dominions, and broke up the Lodges with armed force. Tamino may be intended for the Emperor Joseph II., who, though not a Freemason himself, as his father was, openly protected the brotherhood; and we may look upon Pamina as the representative of the Austrian people. The name of Monostatos seems to be connected with monasticism, and may be intended to typify the clerical party, which, though outwardly on friendly terms with Freemasonry, seems in reality to have been bent upon its destruction.

Papageno and his wife Papagena are excellent representatives of the light-hearted and pleasure-loving population of Vienna. It is difficult to make any explanation fit the story very perfectly, but the sugges-

tion of Freemasonry is enough to acquit Mozart of having allied his music to mere balderdash; while, behind the Masonic business, the discerning hearer will have no difficulty in distinguishing the shadowy outlines of another and a far nobler allegory, the ascent of the human soul, purified by suffering and love, to the highest wisdom. It was this, no doubt, that compelled Goethe's often expressed admiration, and even tempted him to write a sequel to Schikaneder's libretto.

Die Zauberflöte is in form a Singspiel—that is to say, the music is interspersed with spoken dialogue; but there the resemblance to Hiller's creations ceases. From the magnificent fugue in the overture to the majestic choral finale, the music is an astonishing combination of divinely beautiful melody with marvels of contrapuntal skill. Perhaps the most surprising part of *Die Zauberflöte* is the extraordinary ease and certainty with which Mozart manipulates what is practically a new form of art. Nursed as he had been in the traditions of Italian opera, it would not have been strange if he had not been able to shake off the influences of his youth. Yet *Die Zauberflöte* owes but little to any Italian predecessor. It is German to the core. We may be able to point to passages which are a development of something occurring in the composer's earlier works, such as *Die Entführung,* but there is hardly anything in the score of *Die Zauberflöte* which suggests an external influence. Its position in the world of music is ably summarized by Jahn: "If in his Italian operas Mozart assimilated the traditions of a long period of development, and in

some sense put the finishing stroke to it, with *Die Zauberflöte* he treads on the threshold of the future, and unlocks for his country the sacred treasure of national art."

Of Mozart's work as a whole it is impossible to speak save in terms which seem exaggerated. His influence upon subsequent composers cannot be overestimated. Without him, Rossini and modern Italian opera, Weber and modern German opera, Gounod and modern French opera, would have been almost impossible. The form of his operas, with the alternation of airs, concerted pieces and *recitativo secco,* may conceivably strike the ears of the uneducated as old-fashioned, but the feelings of musicians may best be summed up in the words of Gounod: *"O Mozart, divin Mozart! Qu'il faut peu te comprendre pour ne pas t'adorer! Toi, la vérité constante! Toi, la beauté parfaite! Toi, le charme inépuisable! Toi, toujours profond et toujours limpide! Toi, l'humanité complète et la simplicité de l'enfant! Toi, qui as tout ressenti, et tout exprimé dans une langue musicale qu'on n'a jamais surpassée et qu'on ne surpassera jamais."

*O Mozart, divine Mozart! How little one must understand thee not to adore thee! In thee we find eternal truth, perfect beauty, inexhaustible charm! Thou art always profound, always sparkling! In thee we find the perfection of human nature combined with the simplicity of a child! Thou hast expressed every sentiment in a musical language that has never been surpassed and never will be.

The Close of the Classical Period.

The Followers of Gluck.

Mozart and Gluck, each in his respective sphere, carried opera to a point which seemed scarcely to admit of further development. But before the advent of Weber and the romantic revolution there was a vast amount of good work done by a lesser order of musicians, who worked on the lines laid down by their great predecessors, and did much to familiarize the world with the new beauties of their masters' work. The history of art often repeats itself in this way. First comes the genius burning with celestial fire. He sweeps away the time-worn formulas, and founds his new art upon their ruins. Then follows the crowd of disciples, men of talent and imagination, though without the crowning impulse that moves the world. They repeat and amplify their leader's maxims, until the world, which at first had stood aghast at teaching so novel, in time grows accustomed to it, and finally accepts it without question.

Next comes the final stage, when what has been caviare to one generation is become the daily bread of the next. The innovations of the master, caught up and reproduced by his disciples, in the third gen-

eration become the conventional formulas of the art, and the world is ripe once more for a revolution!

Deeply as Gluck's work affected the history of music, his immediate disciples were few. Salieri (1750-1825), an Italian by birth, was chiefly associated with the Viennese court, but wrote his best work, *Les Danaïdes,* for Paris. He caught the trick of Gluck's grand style cleverly, but was hardly more than an imitator. Sacchini (1734-1786) had a more original vein, though he, too, was essentially a composer of the second class. He was not actually a pupil of Gluck, though his later works, written for the Paris stage, show the influence of the composer of *Alceste* very strongly.

Méhul.

The greatest of Gluck's immediate followers—the greatest, because he imbibed the principles of his master's art without slavishly reproducing his form—was Étienne Nicolas Méhul (1763-1817), a composer who is so little known outside of France that it is difficult to speak of him in terms which shall not sound exaggerated to those who are not familiar with his works. How highly he is ranked by French critics may be gathered from the fact that when *Israel in Egypt* was performed for the first time in Paris some years ago, Julien Tiersot, one of the sanest and most clear-headed of contemporary writers on music, gave it as his opinion that Handel's work was less conspicuous for the qualities of dignity and sonority than Méhul's *Joseph.* We can scarcely be expected to echo this opinion, but

as to the intrinsic greatness of Méhul's work there cannot be any question. He was far more of a scientific musician than Gluck, and his scores have nothing of his master's jejuneness. His melody, too, is dignified and expressive, but he is sensibly inferior to Gluck in what may be called dramatic instinct, and this, coupled with the fact that the libretti of his operas are almost uniformly uninteresting, whereas Gluck's are drawn from the immortal legends of the past, is, perhaps, enough to explain why the one has been taken and the other left.

Of Méhul's serious works, few have remained in the current repertory, chiefly owing to their stupid libretti, for there is not one of them that does not contain music of rare excellence. *Stratonice,* a dignified setting of the pathetic old story of the prince who loves his father's betrothed, deserves to live, if only for the sake of the noble air, "Versez tous vos chagrins," a masterpiece of sublime tenderness as fine as anything in Gluck. *Uthal,* a work upon an Ossianic legend, has recently been revived with success in Germany. It embodies a curious experiment in orchestration, the violins being entirely absent from the score. The composer's idea, no doubt, was to represent by this means the grey coloring and misty atmosphere of the scene in which his opera was laid, but the originality of the idea scarcely atones for the monotony in which it resulted. Although his genius was naturally of a serious and dignified cast, Méhul wrote many works in a lighter vein, partly, no doubt, in emulation of Grétry, the prince of opéra comique. Méhul's comic operas are often deficient in sparkle, but their musical force and

the enchanting melodies with which they are begemmed have kept them alive, and several of them—*Une Folie,* for instance, and *Le Trésor Supposé*—have been performed in Germany during the last decade, while *L'Irato,* a brilliant imitation of Italian opera buffa, was recently given at Brussels with great success.

Joseph in Egypt.

Opera in three acts by Méhul. Libretto by Alexandre Duval.

Characters: Jacob; Joseph, under the name of Cleophas; Simeon, Benjamin, Reuben, Napthali, Levi, Judah, Dan, Gad, Asser, Issachar, Sebuton, Jacob's sons; Utobal, Joseph's counsellor.

Place, Memphis and vicinity. First produced at Paris in 1807.

Méhul's last and greatest work, *Joseph in Egypt,* is still performed in France and Germany, and it is seldom heard elsewhere, except in a mutilated concert version. The opera follows the Biblical story closely, and Méhul has reproduced the large simplicity of the Old Testament with rare felicity. From the magnificent opening air, "Champs Paternels," to the sonorous final chorus, the work is rich in beauty of a very high order.

Joseph, the son of Jacob, who was sold by his brothers, has by his wisdom saved Egypt from threatening famine. He resides as governor in Memphis under the name of Cleophas. But though much honored by the King and all the people, he never ceases to long for his venerable father, whose favorite child he was.

Driven from Palestine by the famine, Jacob's sons are sent to Egypt to ask for food and hospitality. They are tormented by pangs of conscience, which Simeon is hardly able to conceal, when they are received by the governor, who at once recognizes them. Seeing their sorrow and repentance, he pities them, and promises to receive them all hospitably. Without revealing himself, he goes to meet his youngest brother, Benjamin, and his blind father, whose mourning for his lost son has not been diminished by the intervening years.

Joseph induces his father and brother to share in the honors which the people render to him. The whole family is received in the governor's palace, where Simeon, consumed by grief and conscience-stricken, at last confesses to his father the selling of Joseph. Full of horror, Jacob curses and disowns his ten sons. But Joseph intervenes. Making himself known, he grants full pardon, and entreats his father to do the same. Finally Jacob yields to Joseph's entreaties.

Lesueur.

Jean François Lesueur (1763-1837) may fitly be mentioned by the side of Méhul. His opera, *Les Bardes,* though now forgotten, has qualities of undeniable excellence. Its faults, as well as its beauties, are those of the period which produced it. It is declamatory rather than lyrical, and decorative rather than dramatic, but in the midst of its conventions and formality there is much that is true as well as picturesque.

Spontini

During the closing years of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the activity of the French school of opera is in remarkable contrast with the stagnation which prevailed in Italy and Germany. Italy, a slave to the facile graces of the Neapolitan school, still awaited the composer who should strike off her chains and renew the youth of her national air; while Germany among the crowds of imitators who clung to the skirts of Mozart's mantle, could not produce one worthy to follow in his steps. Yet though French opera embodied the finest thought and aspiration of the day, it is only just to observe that the impetus which impelled her composers upon new paths of progress came largely from external sources. It is curious to note how large a share foreigners have had in building up the fabric of French opera. Lulli, Gluck and Cherubini, in turn, devoted their genius to its service. They were followed by Gasparo Luigi Pacfico Spontini (1774-1851), who in spite of chauvinistic prejudice, became, on the production of *La Vestale* in 1807, the most popular composer of the day. Spontini's training was Neapolitan, but his first visit to Paris showed him that there was no place upon the French stage for the trivialities which still delighted Italian audiences. He devoted himself to careful study, and his one-act opera, *Milton,* the first-fruits of his musicianship, showed a remarkable advance upon his youthful efforts.

Spontini professed an adoration for Mozart which bordered upon idolatry, but his music shows rather the

influence of Gluck. He is the last of what may be called the classical school of operatic composers, and he shows little trace of the romanticism which was beginning to lay its hand upon music. He was accused during his lifetime of overloading his operas with orchestration, and of writing music which it was impossible to sing—accusations which sound strangely familiar to those who recall the reception of Wagner's operas, when they were first brought out. Spontini's scores would not sound very elaborate nowadays, nor do his melodies appear unusually tortuous or exacting, but he insisted upon violent contrasts from his singers as well as from his orchestra, and the great length of his operas, a point in which he anticipated Meyerbeer and Wagner, probably reduced to exhaustion the artists who were trained on Gluck and Mozart. *La Vestale* was followed in 1809 by *Fernand Cortez,* and in 1819 by *Olympie,* both of which were extremely successful, the latter in a revised form, which was produced at Berlin in 1821. Spontini's operas are now no longer performed, but the influence which his music exercised upon men so different as Wagner and Meyerbeer makes his name important in the history of opera.

La Vestale.

Opera in three acts by Spontini. Libretto by Jouy.

Characters: Licinius, Roman general; Cinna, commander of a legion; the high priest; Julia, a vestal; first priestess; astrologer; priests; vestals; soldiers; people; votaries of Venus.

Place, Rome. First produced in Paris in 1807.

In the first act of *The Vestal,* Licinius, conqueror of the Gauls, is about to be awarded the honors for his victory. Julia, his *fianceé* has during his absence entered the convent of the vestals. Licinius makes an agreement with Julia to meet her at the temple during the night.

In the second act the high-priestess hands Julia the golden wand which is used to stir up the consecrated altar-fire. Left alone, Julia opens the doors of the temple to admit Licinius. At the moment of their meeting the fire at the altar suddenly becomes extinguished. Both the lovers are fully aware of the horrors of their situation. Cinna hastens to the temple in order to save his friend, Licinius, from the fury of the rabble. The high priest pronounces the death sentence of Julia by covering the young girl with a black veil.

In the third act the spectators can see the open trench in which Julia is to be buried alive as a punishment for having violated her solemn oath. Julia is preparing to sacrifice her life, and delivers a farewell prayer to the gods, when Licinius, at the head of his soldiers, makes his appearance, and declares that he is responsible for the sacrilege for which his *fianceé* is about to be punished. The priests then clamor for his death. Suddenly a stroke of lightning lights the fire at the altar anew. Licinius and Cinna carry Julia, who has again fainted, from the ditch. The high priest has to submit to the divine decree, and the last tableau shows the united lovers in the Circus of Flora, presiding over the festivities in honor of Venus.

Imitations of Mozart.

Mozart's success had raised up a crop of imitators, of whom the most meritorious were Süssmayer, his own pupil; Winter, who had the audacity to write a sequel to *Die Zauberflöte;* Weigl, the composer of the popular *Schweizerfamilie;* the Abbé Vogler, who, though now known chiefly by his organ music, was a prolific writer for the stage; and Dittersdorf, a writer of genuine humor, whose spirited Singspiel, *Doktor und Apotheker,* carried on the traditions of Hiller successfully. But though the lighter school of opera in Germany produced nothing of importance, upon the more congenial soil of France opera comique, in the hands of a school of earnest and gifted composers, was acquiring a musical distinction which it was far from possessing in the days of Grétry and Monsigny. Strictly speaking, the operas of Méhul and Cherubini should be ranked as opéras comiques, by reason of the spoken dialogue which takes the place of the recitative; but the high seriousness which continually animates the music of these masters makes it impossible to class their works with operas so different in aim and execution as those of Grétry. Of the many writers of opéra comique at the beginning of this century, it will be enough to mention two of the most prominent, Isouard and Boieldieu.

Isouard.

Nicola Isouard (1777-1818) shone less by musical science or dramatic instinct than by a delicate and

pathetic grace which endeared his music to the hearts of his contemporaries. He had little originality, and his facility often descends to commonplace, but much of the music in *Joconde* and *Cendrillon* lives by grace of its inimitable tenderness and charm. Isouard has been called the Greuze of music.

Cherubini.

Luigi Cherubini (1760-1842), who takes rank among the greatest of Italian musicians of his period, was born in Florence. He was the son of a musician, and soon gave evidence of his ability by writing a mass when only thirteen years of age. The Grand Duke Leopold II., struck by this and other compositions of the boy, granted him a pension to enable him to study under Sarti, then living at Bologna. In addition to strict theoretical studies, the master employed him in writing airs for the less important characters in his operas, and under this guidance he learned all that a master could teach. His first opera, *Quinto Fabio,* was composed in 1780, and had but moderate success; but his reputation gradually increased, and in 1784 he was invited to London, where he remained two years. In 1786 he settled in Paris, and produced his *Demophoon, Lodoiska, Les deux Journées and Anacréon.* These exhibited more science and more musical effect than the Parisians were used to. Unfortunately, with the exception of *Les Deux Journées,* they were handicapped by uninteresting libretti, so that *Les Deux Journeés* is the only one which keeps the stage; but they are all distinguished by nobility of style, and led up to the modern grand opera. In 1806 he brought out his *Faniska* at Vienna, which caused him to be

pronounced, both by Haydn and Beethoven, the first dramatic composer of his time.

It is to be regretted that Napoleon had an antipathy to Cherubini. The manner of the composer was cold and reserved, and probably he may not have shown that respect for the First Consul which he conceived to be his due. Certain it is, however, that no adequate provision was made for the great composer. An inspectorship of the Conservatoire was the only post given to him. Probably this neglect weighed on his mind, for, on his return to Vienna, he ceased altogether to occupy himself in composition. By the persuasion of friends he was induced to write an opera, *Pimmalione,* for the theatre of the Tuileries, which wrung a tribute of admiration even from Napoleon. But after this effort he again forsook his art, devoting himself entirely to the study of botany.

While on a visit to Prince de Chimay, a local musical society was anxious to celebrate St. Cecilia's Day. The president and leading members of the society waited on Cherubini with the request that he would write them a mass. Cherubini replied with coldness that it was impossible, and the deputation retired in dismay. It was observed, however, that the composer took his walk alone in the park, with an air of pre-occupation, and that he was not botanizing, as was his usual habit. Madame de Chimay advised that no notice should be taken, but was wise enough to leave plenty of music paper on his table. In a few days the Kyrie and Gloria were completed, in time for the Saint's feast. The rest of the work was subsequently written in Paris, and performed at the house of Prince

de Chimay. It was a noble work, and the forerunner of much beautiful church music, distinguished by a lofty severity of style.

After the events of 1815 the Conservatoire was abolished. To indemnify Cherubini for the loss of his position, he was appointed superintendent of the King's chapel, and in that capacity produced much of the church music of which we have just spoken. On the resumption of the Conservatoire he was appointed Professor of Composition, and in 1821 became Director. He lived till March, 1842, a power in the musical world, and was buried with every testimony of respect, to the beautiful music of his own requiem.

Although born in Florence and educated in the traditions of the Neapolitan school, Cherubini belongs by right to the French school. His *Lodoiska,* which was produced in Paris in 1791, established his reputation; and *Les Deux Journeés,* sung in English as *The Water-Carrier,* placed him, in the estimation of Beethoven, at the head of all living composers of opera. Posterity has scarcely endorsed Beethoven's dictum, but it is impossible to ignore the beauty of Cherubini's work. The solidity of his concerted pieces and the picturesqueness of his orchestration go far to explain the enthusiasm which his works aroused in a society which as yet knew little, if anything, of Mozart. Cherubini's finest works suffer from a frigidity and formality strangely in contrast with the grace of Grétry or the melody of Méhul, but the infinite resources of his musicianship make amends for lack of inspiration, and *Les Deux Journeés* may still be listened to with pleasure, if not with enthusiasm. In spite of the se-

rious and even heroic cast of the plot, the use of spoken dialogue compels us to class *Les Deux Journeés* as an opéra comique; and spoken dialogne is also introduced in *Médée,* Cherubini's finest work, an opera which for dignity of thought and grandeur of expression deserves to rank high among the productions of the period.

Les Deux Journées.

Opera in three acts by Cherubini. Libretto by Bouilly.

Characters: Count Armand; Costanza, his wife; Michele, Savoyard water-carrier; Daniel, his father; Anton, his grandchild; Marcelline, his sister; Semos, a rich countryman; Angelina, his daughter; captain of Italian troops; lieutenant; sergeant; corporal.

Place, Paris and vicinity. Time, seventeenth century. First produced in Paris in 1800.

The first scene brings us to the house of Michele, a water-carrier of Paris, whose son, Antonio, is just about to marry Angeline, a wealthy young peasant girl living in Genesse. Michele has a daughter, Marcelline, and is indebted for past favors to Count Armand, President of the Parliament of Paris, who is opposed to Cardinal Mazarin, and is accordingly persecuted by the latter. The gates of the city are closed and guarded to prevent the Count from escaping. Nobody is permitted to leave without a pass, but Michele has passes for his son and daughter, and prepares a plan for the escape of Count Armand and his wife, Costanza.

Michele induces Marcelline to absent herself from her brother's wedding, and arranges for Costanza to take her place, and thus pass the city gates, followed by Antonio. This plan is easily carried out, but Michele has now to arrange for Count Armand to join Costanza. The Count hides in one of Michele's water barrels, and is thus borne past the city gates, but during the trip he is compelled to seek refuge in a hollow tree.

As a signal to her husband that everything is safe, it is agreed that Costanza shall clap her hands three times. However, as soldiers are concealed behind the rocks, they capture Costanza, and the Count hastens to her rescue, defending her with the pistols he carries. On being questioned, he has to reveal his real name and rank. Whereupon he is seized and about to be imprisoned, when Michele appears and brings news that the feud between Armand and Mazarin has ended, and that the Count is to have his estates and titles restored to him.

Beethoven.

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn on the Rhine, on December 16th or 17th, 1770, the son of a somewhat disreputable singer in the chapel of the Elector Archbishop of Cologne, whose court was at Bonn. He soon began to show that precocity which is so frequently the accompaniment of musical genius. His father at once looked to his son's abilities as a possible addition to his scanty means, and all the time when the boy was not at school was passed in a constant effort to force his musical talent. In this he was assisted by his friend, Pfeiffer, a tenor singer at the opera, who lived in the same house. That the boy was not disgusted with music altogether only shows how great was the force of his genius. In this way he was made to study both the pianoforte and the violin, as well as the organ, receiving lessons from C. G. Neefe, a capable musician and court organist, whose duties he was soon able to perform. When only twelve years and four months old he was appointed harpsichord-player to the opera—a post which involved the ability to play accompaniments from score during rehearsals. In the year 1787 he was enabled to make a long-wished-for visit to Vienna, and had the good fortune to become acquainted with Mozart, who predicted his future greatness.

The visit was brought to a sudden end by the death of his mother. To keep the household together it was

necessary for Beethoven to add to its resources by giving lessons. Among his pupils were two members of a cultivated family of good position named Von Breuning. The introduction soon ripened into intimacy, and in Madame von Breuning he almost found a second mother, who exercised a most happy influence over his wayward and irritable character, while the intercourse helped to improve his somewhat neglected education. He found another good friend in Count Waldstein, an excellent amateur, who presented him with a pianoforte, and also rendered him pecuniary help in so delicate a manner that his susceptibilities were not wounded. It was probably owing to his good offices with the Elector, and perhaps with some assistance from himself, that Beethoven was enabled in 1792 to pay another visit to Vienna. He had made the acquaintance of Haydn in a visit the latter made to Bonn, and it was his intention to place himself under the old master, who set him to work on the *Gradus ad Parnassum* of Fux. The respective characters of master and pupil were but ill adapted to each other. Beethoven always maintained that he learned nothing of Haydn, and it was with small regret on the part of the former that the intercourse was brought to an end by the visit of Haydn to England. But he was still anxious to ground himself thoroughly in counterpoint, and with this view placed himself under Albrechtsberger, a very learned but dry musician, while at the same time he studied with Salieri the art of writing for the voice.

His musical ability, as well as the real worth concealed under a rough exterior, seem to have been soon

recognized by the leaders of musical society in Vienna. Baron von Swieten, the friend both of Haydn and of Mozart, gladly welcomed him to his Sunday concerts, and Prince Lichnowsky and his beautiful wife, formerly Countess von Thun, almost adopted him as a son, and he was soon installed as an inmate of their house. His wayward and eccentric habits rendered the arrangement somewhat difficult. Beethoven could not be brought to conform to fixed hours for meals, nor to the ordinary habits of costume common in good society. The Countess, however, while doing her best to correct his faults, treated him with remarkable consideration and judgment, and the arrangement seems to have lasted for six years. One of the great advantages he enjoyed there was the celebrated quartet party, which met at the palace every Friday, consisting of Schuppanzigh, Sina, Weiss and Kraft, which led his thoughts to that kind of composition. Among other members of the aristocracy, the Archduke Rudolph became his pupil. At a large party at Prince Lichnowsky's were first performed the three pianoforte trios, Op. 1, Haydn being present. The veteran master approved of the first two, but tried to dissuade Beethoven from publishing the last—the one in C minor. It was the composer's favorite, and Haydn's judgment led to a final rupture, although Beethoven dedicated his set of pianoforte sonatas, Op. 2, to his old master.

He was at first recognized rather as a virtuoso than as a composer, and was especially distinguished as an improviser. Anything like display, however, was hateful to him, and on many occasions it was with the greatest difficulty that he could be induced to perform. His

public appearances were, however, few, and generally for some charitable object—for instance, he played one of Mozart's concertos at a performance organized for the benefit of the great composer's widow, and it is not surprising to learn that the effect of his playing was produced rather by intense feeling than by excellence of mechanism. Up to the time when he settled in Vienna, his publications had been few and unimportant, but now began that period of productiveness which ceased only with his death. His earliest compositions show an obvious imitation of the style of Haydn, and even more of Mozart, although abounding in many signs of originality.

In 1803, Emmanuel Schickaneder, the librettist of Mozart's *Magic Flute,* proposed to Beethoven to write an opera. The negotiation fell through, to be resumed later, in 1805. The *libretto* chosen was taken from the French of Bouilly—"*Leonora; ou, l'amour conjugale,*" and had already been twice set to music. Beethoven, as his habit was, retired to the country to be uninterrupted while composing, returning in time to superintend the rehearsals. Singers and orchestras alike gave him infinite trouble, and the opera was produced at a most unfortunate time, when the French army had just made its entry into Vienna. Four performances only were given, to empty benches. The opera was afterwards reduced from three to two acts, and brought out again in 1806 under the title of *Fidelio,* with but little more success, and it was only gradually that it made its way with the public. The part of the heroine demands a great actress, and it was not till Madame Schröder Devrient took it up that the

popularity of the opera was assured. It is well known that *Fidelio* enjoys the unique distinction of having had four overtures written for it.

In 1801 Beethoven was overtaken with the beginning of that malady which embittered the remainder of his existence—deafness—a calamity especially terrible to a musician. Nor was his life made pleasant by the settlement in Vienna of his two brothers, who caused him much annoyance by officious meddling in his concerns. Still worse trouble followed, for in 1815 the younger brother died, leaving Beëthoven the guardian of his only son, Carl, then in his ninth year. The widow resented the arrangement, and the result was a lawsuit, which dragged on for four years, when it was decided that the mother was unfit to be entrusted with the education of the boy. With the best intentions, Beethoven took his nephew to live with him, but he was utterly unfit to manage the practical affairs of life, and the plan ended in failure. As he grew up Carl tried several careers, succeeding in none, and at last attempted suicide. The devotion of Beethoven to so unworthy an object is most touching, and to the end of his life he continued to work and to save with a view of providing for his ungrateful and worthless nephew.

About the year 1808 Jerome Bonaparte, King of Westphalia, offered Beethoven the post of capellmeister at Cassel. The salary was to be about $1500. To induce him to remain in Vienna, the Archduke Rudolph, Prince Lobhowitz and Prince Kinsky agreed to make him a yearly allowance of 4000 florins. This well-meant arrangement was a source of much worry,

for the value of Austrian money depreciated rapidly, and after a time Prince Kinsky became bankrupt. Beethoven's wants were moderate. He was now making a fair income by the sale of his compositions, and it does not appear that actual pecuniary trouble was added to his other miseries.

At the end of 1826 his health gave way, and he was seized with inflammation of the lungs, followed by dropsy. He had quarreled with several physicians of eminence, and it was not till after some delay, owing to his nephew's neglect, that any doctor attended him, and then an inferior practitioner. At last Dr. Malfatti, whom he had also dismissed without ceremony on a previous occasion, was induced to overlook old grievances. Under his treatment hopes revived. The great composer, unable to work, conceiving himself debarred from touching the sum laid aside for his nephew, lay on his sick-bed in great straits. In his trouble he thought of the offer of the Philharmonic Society, which at once sent him £100 on account of a concert which they proposed to give for his benefit; and thus he lingered on till March 26th, 1827, when at five in the afternoon, during a thunderstorm, the great master passed away, in his fifty-seventh year.

Fidelio.

Opera in two acts by Beethoven. Libretto from the French of Bouilly by Sonnleithner.

Characters: Don Fernando, minister; Don Pizarro, Governor of the State's Prison; Florestan, a prisoner; Léonore, his wife, under the name of Fidelio; Rocko,

keeper; Marzelline, his daughter; Jaquino, gatekeeper; a captain.

Place, a Spanish State's Prison in the vicinity of Seville. First produced at Vienna in 1805.

Fidelio, Beethoven's one contribution to the lyric stage, was written in 1804 and 1805, and was produced at Vienna in the latter year, during the French occupation. The libretto, as stated above, is of French origin, and the story had formed the basis of more than one opera; indeed, it was a performance of Paer's *Eleonora* which originally led Beethoven to think of writing his work. Simple as it is, the plot has true nobility of design, and the purity of its motive contrasts favorably with the tendency of the vast majority of lyric dramas. Florestan, a Spanish nobleman, has fallen into the power of his bitterest enemy, Pizarro, the governor of a state prison near Madrid. There the unfortunate Florestan is confined in a loathsome dungeon, without light or air, dependent upon the mercy of Pizarro for the merest crust of bread. Leonore, the unhappy prisoner's wife, has discovered his place of confinement, and, in the hope of rescuing him, disguises herself in male attire and hires herself as servant to Rocco, the head gaoler, under the name of Fidelio. In this condition she has to endure the advances of Marcelline, the daughter of Rocco, who neglects her lover, Jaquino, for the sake of the attractive newcomer.

Before Leonore has had time to mature her plans, news comes to the prison of the approaching visit of the Minister Fernando on a tour of inspection. Pizarro's only chance of escaping the detection of his

crime is to put an end to Florestan's existence, and he orders Rocco to dig a grave in the prisoner's cell. Leonore obtains leave to help the gaoler in his task, and together they descend to the dungeon, where the unfortunate Florestan is lying in a half inanimate condition. When their task is finished Pizarro himself comes down, and is on the point of stabbing Florestan, when Leonore throws herself between him and his victim, a pistol in her hand, and threatens the assassin with instant death if he advances a step. At that moment a flourish of trumpets announces the arrival of Fernando. Pizarro is forced to hurry off to receive his guest, and the husband and wife rush into each other's arms. The closing scene shows the discomfiture and disgrace of Pizarro, and the restoration of Florestan to his lost honors and dignity.

The form of *Fidelio,* like that of *Die Zauberflöte,* is that of the Singspiel. In the earlier and lighter portions of the work the construction of the drama does not differ materially from that of the generality of Singspiele, but in the more tragic scenes the spoken dialogue is employed with novel and extraordinary force. So far from suggesting any feeling of anti-climax, the sudden relapse into agitated speech often gives an effect more thrilling than any music could command. At two points in the drama this is especially remarkable—firstly, in the prison quartet, after the flourish of trumpets, when Jaquino comes in breathless haste to announce the arrival of the Minister; and secondly, in the brief dialogue between the husband and wife, which separates the quartet from the following duet. Leonore's famous words, "Nichts, nichts,

mein Florestan," in particular, if spoken with a proper sense of their exquisite truth and beauty, sum up the passionate devotion of the true-hearted wife, and her overflowing happiness at the realization of her dearest hopes, in a manner which for genuine pathos can scarcely be paralleled upon the operatic stage.

It is hardly necessary to point out to the student of opera the steady influence which Mozart's music exercised upon Beethoven's development. Yet, although Beethoven learned much from the composer of *Don Giovanni,* there is a great deal in *Fidelio* with which Mozart had nothing to do. The attitude of Beethoven towards opera—to go no deeper than questions of form —was radically different from that of Mozart. Beethoven's talent was essentially symphonic rather than dramatic, and magnificent as *Fidelio* is, it has many passages in which it is impossible to avoid feeling that the composer is forcing his talent into an unfamiliar if not uncongenial channel. This is especially noticeable in the concerted pieces, in which Beethoven sometimes seems to forget all about opera, characters, dramatic situation and everything else in the sheer delight of writing music. No one with an ounce of musical taste in his composition would wish the canon-quartet, the two trios or the two finales, to take a few instances at random, any shorter or less developed than they are, but one can imagine how Mozart would have smiled at the lack of dramatic feeling displayed in their construction.

Boieldieu.

The name of Boieldieu is widely known, and his opera, *La Dame Blanche,* still keeps the stage, not only in his native country, but also in Germany. Boieldieu was born in 1775 at Rouen, where his father was secretary to the Archbishop. The boy obtained his musical education from the organist of the cathedral, and produced a couple of operas with success in his native city. A local reputation, of course, failed to satisfy him, and he made his way to Paris, where he became acquainted with Cherubini and other musicians. His opera, *La Famille Suisse,* was produced at the Théâtre Feydeau, and meeting with success, was followed by several others, culminating in *Le Calife de Bagdad.* He was a man of great modesty, and always bent on self-improvement in his art. It is said that after a performance of *Le Calife,* in which the composer had been overwhelmed with applause, Cherubini met him in the theatre and addressed him with the words, "Malheureux! are you not ashamed of such undeserved success?" Boieldieu replied with a request for further instruction. There was an interval of three years before he produced his next opera, *Ma Tante Aurore.*

In 1803, for reasons which have not been explained, Boieldieu left Paris and took up his residence in St. Petersburg, where he remained eight years, filling the post of conductor at the opera, but writing nothing of

sufficient importance to add to his reputation. In 1811 he returned to Paris. Some of his former operas were revived, and he produced his *Jean de Paris,* which showed a great advance on his previous efforts. To this succeeded several operas now forgotten, with the exception of *Le petit Chaperon rouge.* It almost seemed as though his powers had failed him, when in 1825 *La Dame Blanche* burst upon the musical world. Its success was unprecedented. Strange to say, the very popular overture was in reality written by his pupil, Adolphe Adam. It is sad to have to report that the later years of the composer's life were clouded both by illness and by straitened circumstances, caused by the bankruptcy of the Opéra Comique and by the expulsion of Charles X., who had allowed him a pension, which after a time was restored to him by Louis Philippe.

La Dame Blanche.

Comic opera in three acts by Boieldieu. Libretto by Scribe.

Characters: Gaveston, in charge of the castle of the former Count of Avenel; Anna, his ward; George, a young English officer; Dickson, farmer; Jenny, his wife; Margaret, housekeeper at the castle; McIrton, justice of the peace.

Place, Scotland. Time, 1759. First produced in Paris in 1825.

Although Boieldieu worked within restricted limits, his originality and resource place him among the great masters of French music. His earlier works are, in the

main, light and delicate trifles; but in *Jean de Paris* and *La Dame Blanche* he shows real solidity of style and no little command of musical invention, combined with the delicate melody and pathetic grace which rarely deserted him. The real strength and distinction of *La Dame Blanche* have sufficed to keep it alive until the present day, although it has never, in spite of the Scottish origin of the libretto, won elsewhere a tithe of the popularity which it enjoys in France.

The story is a combination of incidents taken from Scott's "Monastery" and "Guy Mannering." The Laird of Avenel, who was obliged to fly from Scotland after the battle of Culloden, entrusted his estates to his steward, Gaveston. Many years having passed without tidings of the absentee, Gaveston determines to put the castle and lands up for sale. He has sedulously fostered a tradition, which is current among the villagers, that the castle is haunted by a White Lady, hoping by this means to deter any of the neighboring farmers from competing with him for the estate. The day before the sale takes place, Dickson, one of the farmers, is summoned to the castle by Anna, an orphan girl who had been befriended by the Laird. Dickson is too superstitious to venture, but his place is taken by George Brown, a young soldier, who arrived at the village that day.

George has an interview with the White Lady, who is, of course, Anna in disguise. She recognizes George as the man whose life she saved after a battle, and knowing him to be the rightful heir of Avenel, promises to help him in recovering his property. She has discovered that treasure is concealed in a statue of the White Lady,

and with this she empowers George to buy back his ancestral lands and castle. Gaveston is outbidden at the sale, and George weds Anna.

Boieldieu's music has much melodic beauty, though its tenderness is apt to degenerate into sentimentality. In its original form the opera would nowadays be unbearably tiresome, and only a judicious shortening of the interminable duets and trios can make them tolerable to a modern audience. In spite of much that is conventional and old-fashioned, the alternate vigor and grace of *La Dame Blanche* and the genuine musical interest of the score make it the most favorable specimen of this period of French opéra comique. It is the last offspring of the older school. After Boieldieu's time the influence of Rossini became paramount, and opéra comique, unable to resist a spell so formidable, began to lose its distinctively national characteristics.

Jean de Paris.

Comic opera in two acts by Boieldieu. Libretto by St. Just.

Characters: The Princess of Navarre; the chief Seneschal of the princess; John of Paris; Oliver; Pedrigo, innkeeper; Lorezza, his daughter.

Place, an inn in the Pyrenees. Time, the seventeenth century. First produced at Paris in 1812.

Jean de Paris is, next to *La Dame Blanche,* decidedly the best of Boieldieu's operas.

The scene takes us back to the seventeenth century, and we find ourselves in an inn of the Pyrenees. The

young and beautiful widow, Princess of Navarre, her year of mourning having passed, is induced by her brother, the King of Navarre, to marry again. The French Crown Prince has been selected by the two courts as her future husband, but both the Prince and the Princess are of a somewhat romantic turn of mind, and desire to know each other before being united for life.

For this purpose the Prince undertakes a journey to the Pyrenees, where he knows he will find the Princess. In the first scene we see preparations being made for the reception of the Princess, whose arrival has been announced by her Seneschal. In the midst of the bustle there enters a simple Page to demand rooms for his master. As he is on foot the host treats him with contempt, but his daughter, Lorezza, pleased with his good looks, promises him a good dinner. While they are still debating, the numerous suite of the Prince comes up, and without further ado takes possession of the house and stables, which have been prepared for the Princess and her people. The host begins to feel more favorably inclined towards the strange Seigneur, though he does not understand how a simple citizen of Paris (this is the Prince's incognito), can afford such luxury.

By the time "Monsieur Jean de Paris" arrives the host's demeanor has entirely changed, and, seeing two large purses with gold, he abandons the whole house to the strange guest, hoping that he will have departed before the arrival of the Princess. But no sooner are the followers of Jean de Paris quartered in the house than the Seneschal, a pompous Spanish Grandee, arrives to announce the coming of the Princess. The host is hope-

lessly embarrassed, and the Seneschal rages at the impudence of the citizen, but Jean de Paris quietly intimates that the house and everything in it are hired by him, and courteously declares that he will play the host and invite the Princess to his house and dinner.

While the Seneschal is still stupefied by such unusual impudence, the Princess arrives, and at once captivates everybody by her grace and loveliness. Jean de Paris is fascinated, and the Princess, who instantly recognizes in him her future bridegroom, is equally pleased with him, but resolves to profit and to amuse herself by her discovery. To the Seneschal's unbounded surprise she graciously accepts Jean's invitation.

In the second act the preparations for the dinner of the honored guests have been made. Oliver, the Page, shows pretty Lorezza the minuets of the ladies at court, and she dances and sings in her simple country-fashion.

Jean de Paris then appears upon the scene, sings an air in praise of God, beauty and chivalry, and when the Princess appears he leads her to dinner, to the unutterable horror of the Seneschal. Dinner, service, plate, silver are sumptous, and all belong to Jean de Paris, who sings a tender minstrel song to the Princess. She tells him that she has already chosen her knight, who is true, honest and of her own rank, and makes him believe for a while that he is too late—until he perceives that she is only coquetting in order to punish him for his own comedy. Finally they confess their love for each other, and when the people come in the Prince, revealing his true name, presents the

Princess as his bride, bidding his suite render homage to their future mistress. The Seneschal humbly asks forgiveness, and all unite in a chorus in praise of the princely couple.

Weber.

Founder of the Romantic School.

The father of Carl Maria von Weber was Franz Anton, Baron von Weber. He had been lieutenant in the Guard of the Elector of the Palatinate, at whose court both he and his brother Fridolin, the father of Mozart's wife, were famous as musical amateurs. Franz Anton, being probably the most unsuitable man to be found, was made Financial Counsellor and District Judge to the Bishop of Lübeck and Eutin. He married a lady of some fortune, which he devoted himself to squandering, breaking his wife's heart in the process. A change of bishops having occurred, the Financial Counsellor was pensioned, and for want of a better occupation became director of a strolling company of players. At the age of fifty he married Genovefa von Brenner, a delicate girl of sixteen, and from this union, on December 18th, 1716, was born the famous composer Carl Maria von Weber—a weak, sickly child, with a disease of the hip which made him permanently lame.

It was the ambition of the elder Weber to be the father of a prodigy who should rival his nephew Mozart. He had done all in his power to develop the abilities of his elder children, with but moderate result. His youngest son showed more promise, and this promise was forced by all the means at his father's disposal; but the latter possessed neither the sound knowledge nor

the good sense of the elder Mozart, so that the boy's education was unsystematic, especially as the dramatic company was constantly moving from town to town. His mother died of consumption before her son reached the age of twelve. When only fourteen he had composed an opera, *Das Waldmädchen.* One advantage the boy gained from the life he led—a thorough knowledge of the stage and all its requirements. He was able to paint scenes, to design costumes, and to undertake the duties of stage manager; all of which gifts helped to make him the perfect director of an opera which he subsequently became. For a time he studied with Michael Haydn, and wrote a comic opera, *Peter Schmoll,* produced at Augsburg in 1803, but with no effect. His father then placed him under the Abbé Vogler, through whose influence Weber obtained the post of conductor of the Opera at Breslau, being then only eighteen years of age. During this time he worked hard at the pianoforte, on which he became a remarkable performer. An unfortunate accident, which incapacitated him for some months, led to his resigning this appointment at the end of two years. While at Breslau he composed several numbers of an opera, *Rübezahl,* of which but little survives, with the exception of the overture, now known as *The Ruler of the Spirits.*

Circumstances led to his accepting the office of secretary to Duke Louis of Würtemburg, at Stuttgart, a dissipated young man, who employed his secretary principally in raising loans from the king for the purposes of his debauches. It was a bad school for Weber, but it enabled him to make many pleasant acquaintances, among whom were Spohr, Dannecker the sculptor, Mat-

thison the poet, and Danzi, conductor of the opera, a worthy man who did all in his power to keep the young secretary in the right path. His youthful opera, *Das Waldmädchen,* was remodelled, with the assistance of a brilliant young friend of the musician, who led him into all sorts of extravagances, under the name of *Sylvana.* The opera was in rehearsal when it was discovered that his worthless father had appropriated a sum of money entrusted by the Duke to his secretary. The son was entirely innocent of any complicity in his father's crime, but both were sent across the frontier and banished forever.

This circumstance was really the making of the composer. The exiles made their way to Mannheim, where Carl Maria found a home for his father and resolved to devote himself to serious study. He resumed his intercourse with Vogler, and at his house made the acquaintance of Meyerbeer, the son of a wealthy banker in Berlin, who devoted himself entirely to music, and although only seventeen was already one of the first pianists of the day. Under this impulse Weber composed much music for the pianoforte, and also his operetta *Abu Hassan.* In the autumn of 1810 his opera, *Sylvana,* the performance of which had been so rudely interrupted, was brought out at Frankfort, but the ascent of a female aëronaut had superior attractions for the public, and the work obtained but very moderate success. In one respect the performance was noticeable: the leading part was taken by a charming young singer, Caroline Brandt, who subsequently became Weber's wife.

In the following year he began a long tour through Germany and Switzerland as a pianist, in part of which

he was accompanied by his friend, Baermann, the eminent clarinettist—a connection which had the result of adding several fine compositions, including two concertos, to the *répertoire* of that instrument. While at Munich the operetta, *Abu Hassan,* was performer with the greatest success, and at once made its way to the principal theatres in Germany.

In 1813 he became musical director of the theatre at Prague, where his youthful experiences proved most useful to him. The opera in that city needed a thorough reform. He got together an excellent company, including the charming Caroline Brandt, and at once put Spontini's *Fernand Cortez* in rehearsal. His energy inspired the whole company; a magnificent performance was the result, and it was followed up by the production of other works selected from various schools. At this period Prussia had succeeded in throwing off the yoke of Napoleon, and the whole country was in a state of patriotic excitement consequent on the victorious battle of Leipzig. This feeling found vent with Weber in the famous part-songs *Lützow's Wild Hunt* and the *Sword Song,* which soon spread over the length and breadth of the land, and did much to extend his fame.

At Christmas 1816, he received the appointment of Capellmeister to the King of Saxony, with the object of organizing a national German Opera in Dresden. Morlacchi (an Italian composer of respectable acquirements, but of an intriguing spirit), was already installed as director of the Italian opera, and the King's preference was for Italian music. Weber's life, therefore, was not altogether a bed of roses. He seems to have taken a lofty view of his mission to regenerate the

music of his country, and, moreover, he defended his views with much literary ability and vigor in the journals, which had a tendency to increase the rancor of his opponents. One consolation he possessed in his union with Caroline Brandt.

At the suggestion of Count Brühl, the *intendant* at Berlin, Weber was employed to compose the incidental music to *Preciosa,* a work which he completed with the happiest results; but the subject of *The Hunter's Bride,* subsequently known as *Der Freischütz,* had long been floating in his mind. A libretto was at last arranged by Kind, and it was produced for the opening of the new opera house in Berlin on June 18th, 1821. His friends were afraid that the great popularity of Spontini's works in that city would interfere with his success, but the new opera was received with the greatest enthusiasm. At Vienna the excitement it created was even greater. It soon made its way all over Europe—unfortunately often in garbled versions, as was the case both in Paris and in London, where it was running simultaneously at Covent Garden and the Lyceum. The Huntsman's Chorus was heard everywhere, and the composer was overwhelmed with offers of commissions. Unfortunately his choice of a librettist fell on a certain sentimental poetess, Helmina von Chezy, who concocted an absurd drama, *Euryanthe,* which he composed for Vienna. The music was beautiful, some say his masterpiece, but it was weighed down by the libretto, and was not successful.

And now we come to the sad ending of Weber's life. The success of *Der Freischütz,* prompted Charles Kemble, then lessee of Covent Garden Theatre, to in-

duce the composer to write an opera for that theatre, and to visit England to produce it. Planché was employed to write a *libretto* based on Wieland's *Oberon.* The composer was already in the last stage of consumption, and was warned by his doctor that the visit would probably end fatally, but the desire to provide for his family was too powerful. His friend Fürstenau, a distinguished flute-player in the Dresden orchestra, offered to accompany him, for he was wholly unfit to travel alone. He found a comfortable home and kind attention in the house of Sir George Smart, and was enabled to superintend the rehearsals of the new opera and to conduct selections from *Der Freischütz* in those curious entertainments called oratorios held in the theatres during Lent.

On April 12, 1826, *Oberon* was produced. The composer was received with indescribable enthusiasm. He had undertaken to conduct twelve performances, and was enabled to do so, but with great difficulty. He then proceeded to arrange his benefit concert, from which he had great expectations. By unaccountable oversight this was fixed for the Epsom week, and the weather was disastrous, so that the results were a disappointment. He had just strength enough to accompany Miss Stephens (the late Countess of Essex), in a song specially written for the occasion, and he was taken home. His great anxiety was to get back to his family at once. His kind friends humored his intention, but saw that it was impossible.

On the evening of June 4th, Moscheles and Göschen, father of the then First Lord of the Admiralty, came to say farewell, and at ten o'clock Sir George Smart

and Fürstenau prevailed on him to retire to bed; the latter was anxious to sit up with him, but the offer was refused. In the morning, Sir George Smart's servant knocked at the door. The only sound was the ticking of his watch. At last the door was forced open, and the master was found as if in a peaceful sleep, but he was dead—far away from the wife and children he loved so well. He was buried on June 17th with every mark of respect in the church of St. Mary, Moorfields, to the solemn strains of Mozart's Requiem, sung by Miss Stephens, Miss Paton, Braham, and Lablache. Many years after—in 1844—his body was removed to Dresden, in great measure at the instigation of Richard Wagner.

The reputation of Weber rests, no doubt, mainly on his operatic music—especially on *Der Freischütz,* which inaugurated the school of "romantic" opera so ably continued by Meyerbeer, Marschner and Wagner. The overtures to *Der Freischütz, Euryanthe* and *Oberon* were a departure in construction, and have been called "programme overtures"—that is, they were based on subjects used in the opera so woven together as to give almost an epitome of the work. The practice has been objected to, but there can be no doubt that in Weber's hands the results were some of the most exciting works in the whole range of music. He was the first to insist on the national element in music which afterwards so strongly influenced Wagner.

Although, for the sake of convenience, it is customary to speak of Weber as the founder of the romantic school in music, it must not be imagined that the new school sprang into being at the production of *Der Freichütz.*

For many years the subtle influence of the romantic school in literature—the circle which gathered round Tieck, Fichte, and the Schlegels—had been felt in music. We have seen how the voluptuous delights of Armida's garden affected even the stately muse of Glück; and in the generation which succeeded him, though opera still followed classic lines of form, in subject and treatment it was tinged with the prismatic colors of romance. Méhul's curious experiments in orchestration, and the solemn splendor of Mozart's Egyptian mysteries, alike show the influence of the romantic spirit as surely as the weirdest piece of *diablerie* ever devised by Weber or his followers. Yet though intimations of the approaching change had for long been perceptible to the discerning eye, it was not until the days of Weber that the classical forms and methods which had ruled the world of opera since the days of Glück gave way before the newer and more vivid passion of romance. Even then it must not be forgotten that the romantic school differed from the classic more in view of life and treatment of subject than in actual subject itself.

The word romance conjures up weird visions of the supernatural or glowing pictures of chivalry; but although it is true that Weber and his followers loved best to treat of such themes as these, they had by no means been excluded from the repertory of their classical predecessors. The supernatural terrors of *Der Freischütz* must not make us forget the terrific finale to *Don Giovanni,* nor can the most glowing picture from *Euryanthe* erase memories of Rinaldo and the Crusaders in *Armide.* The romantic movement, however,

as interpreted by Weber, aimed definitely at certain things, which had not previously come within the scope of music, though for many years they had been the common property of art and literature. The romantic movement was primarily a revolt against the tyranny of man and his emotions. It claimed a wider stage and an ampler air. Nature was not henceforth to be merely the background against which man played his part. The beauty of landscape, the glory of the setting sun, the splendor of the sea, the mystery of the forest—all these the romantic movement taught men to regard not merely as the accessories of a scene in which man was the predominant figure, but as subjects in themselves worthy of artistic treatment.

The genius of Weber was a curious compound of two differing types. In essence it was thoroughly German—sane in inspiration, and drawing its strength from the homely old Volkslieder, so dear to every true German heart. Yet, over the solid foundation there soared an imagination surely more delicate and ethereal than has ever been alloted to mortal musician before or since, by the aid of which Weber was enabled to treat all subjects beneath heaven with equal success. He is equally at home in the eerie horrors of the Wolf's Glen, in the moonlit revels of Oberon, and in the knightly pomp and circumstance of the Provençal court.

At the present time, however, the only opera of Weber which can truthfully be said to belong to the current repertory is *Der Freischütz,* and even this is rarely performed out of Germany. The small amount of favor which *Euryanthe* and *Oberon* enjoy is due, as has been already pointed out, chiefly to the weakness of

their libretti, yet it seems strange that the man to whom the whole tendency of modern opera is due should hold so small a place in our affections. The changes which Weber and his followers effected, though less drastic, were in their results fully as important as those of Gluck. In the orchestra as well as on the stage he introduced a new spirit, a new point of view. What modern music owes to him may be summed up in a word. Without Weber, Wagner would have been impossible.

Silvana.

Opera in four acts by Weber. Libretto adapted by Hiemer from the libretto of *Das Waldmädchen.*

Characters: The Legend; the Count of the Rhine; Count Gerold, his son; Silvana; Ratto, the charcoal burner; Dryada, wood nymph; Guntram, vassal of the count; the Abbot of St. Goar; a Turnkey.

Place, the castles Sternberg and Liebenstein and vicinity. First produced at Frankfort-on-the-Main, in 1810.

Silvana was founded on Weber's juvenile opera, *Das Waldmädchen,* produced at Freiberg in 1800. A new version of Silvana was brought out at Hamburg in 1885. The text of the new version was written by Ernest Pasqué, and the music was composed by Ferdinand Langer, who rearranged the manuscript with loving care, interweaving different compositions from Weber, as for instance his "Invitation à la valse," and his "Polonaise," which are dexterously introduced into the ballet of the second act.

The action of Silvana is taken from an old German legend which comes to us from the land of the Rhine. There we may still find the ruins of the two castles Sternberg and Liebenstein. Of these the legend says that they belonged to two brothers, who hated each other, for the one, Boland, loved his brother's bride, and was refused by her. By way of revenge he slew his brother, and burned down his castle. But in this fray the wife he coveted disappeared with her child, and both were supposed to have perished in the flames.

After that Boland fell into deep melancholy and the consequences of his crime never ceased to torment him. His only son, who lost his mother in early childhood, grew up in solitude, the hunt being his only passion.

In the beginning of the first act we see him hunting in the forest. He has lost his way and his companions and finds himself in a spot, which he has never before seen. A beautiful maiden comes out of a small cottage, and both fall in love at first sight. The returning collier desires to keep his only child, who has not yet seen anything of the world; but the nymph of the forest, Silvana's protectress, beckons him away. When at length the Count's fellow-hunters find him, he presents Silvana to them as his bride. The unfortunate collier is made drunk with wine, and during his sleep they take his daughter away to the castle of the old Rhinegrave.

But Silvana is protected in her new world by the nymph, who follows her in the guise of a young minstrel. The old Count, hearing of his son's resolution, is quite willing to receive the bride, and even consents to go to the peasant's festival, and look at the dancing and frolicking, given in honor of his son's bridal.

There we find Ratto, the collier, who seeks his daughter Silvana, telling everybody that robbers took her away from him, and beseeching assistance in his search for her. Meanwhile, Silvana arrives in rich and costly attire, escorted by Gerold, the young Count, and the old Rhinegrave. The latter, attracted by her fairness and innocence, has welcomed her as his daughter without asking for antecedents. When the dances of the villagers have ended, the nymph enters in the guise of a minstrel, asking to be allowed to sing to the hearers, as was the custom on the banks of the Rhine.

Silvana begins her ballad, the story of which terrifies the Rhinegrave, for he is compelled to listen to the tale of his own nefarious deed. Springing up, he draws his sword against the minstrel, but Silvana rises, protecting the minstrel with outstretched arms. All are stupefied. Gerold looks with suspicion on his bride, clinging to the breast of the stranger. He asks for an explanation, but Silvana is silent. It is part of her trial not to betray the nymph. At the same moment Ratto, the collier, recognizes and claims Silvana as his daughter. Everybody now looks with contempt on the low-born maiden, and the Rhinegrave commands them to be put into prison; but Gerold, believing in his bride's innocence, though appearances are against her, entreats her once more to defend herself. Silvana only asserts her innocence and her love for Gerold, but will give no proofs. So the collier with his daughter and the minstrel are taken to prison. But when the keeper opens the door in the morning, the minstrel has disappeared.

The old Count, disgusted at the idea of his son's union with a collier's daughter, accuses her of being a sor-

ceress. He compels her to confess that she lured his son by magic arts, and Silvana consents to say anything rather than injure her lover. She is conducted before a court and condemned to the funeral pile. Gerold, confident of her innocence, is resolved to share her death, when at the critical moment the minstrel once more raises his voice and finishes the ballad, which the Rhinegrave had interrupted so violently. He tells the astonished hearers, that the wife and daughter of the Count, who was slain by his brother, were not burned in the castle, but escaped to the forest, finding kindly refuge in a poor collier's hut where the mother died, leaving her child, Silvana, under his protection. The Rhinegrave, full of remorse, embraces Silvana, beseeching her forgiveness, and the lovers are united.

Abu Hassan.

Operetta in one act. Music by Weber. Libretto adapted from a tale in the *Arabian Nights* by F. K. Hiemer.

Characters: The Calif of Bagdad; Zobeïde, his wife; Mesrur, chamberlain; Zemrud, nurse of Zobeïde; Omar, money-lender.

Place, Bagdad. First produced at Munich in 1811.

Abu Hassan, was Weber's first real success. Slight as the story is, it is by no means uninteresting, and the music, which is a piece of the daintiest filagree-work imaginable, has helped to keep the little work alive to the present day.

The text is taken from a tale of the *Arabian Thousand and One Nights,* and though full of nonsense,

it amuses by its lightheartedness and gaiety of spirit.

Abu Hassan, favorite of the Calif of Bagdad, has lived above his means, and is now regaled with bread and water by his wife, Fatima, whose only fault is, that she sings better than she cooks. In order to better his fortunes Abu Hassan hits upon a strange plan. He sends his wife to the Calif's wife, Zobeïde, to announce his (Hassan's) death, for which she will obtain fifty gold pieces and a piece of brocade. Fatima departs, and in the meantime enter Abu Hassan's creditors with the appeal for money. Unable to satisfy them the debtor approaches the eldest and richest among them, and so pacifies him with sweet words, which he is given to understand Fatima has sent him, that old Omar consents to pay all the creditors.

When they are gone, Fatima returns with Zobeïde's presents, and Abu Hassan prepares to go in his turn to the Calif, in order to repeat a similar death-story about his wife and get a like sum. While he is away Omar reappears. He has bought all Hassan's accounts from his numerous creditors, and offers them to Fatima for a kiss. At this moment the husband returns. Omar is shut into the adjoining cabinet, and the wife secretly points out the caged bird to her spouse, who begins to storm at finding the door of the next room closed, greatly to the anguish of the old sinner Omar,—anguish, which is enjoyed by his tormentors to the full.

In the midst of this scene Mesrur, messenger of the Calif, appears, to find out whether Fatima is really dead. The Calif and his wife having each received news of the death of the other's favorite, want to know, who it was, that died, and—if both are dead—who died

first. The Calif affirms, that it is Fatima—his wife, that it is Abu Hassan. They have made a bet, and Mesrur, seeing Fatima lying motionless on the divan, covered with the brocade, and her husband in evident distress beside her, runs away to convey the tidings to the Calif. He is hardly gone, when Zobeïde's nurse, Zemrud, comes on a similar errand from her mistress. Fatima, who has just covered her husband with the brocade, receives her with tears and laments, and the nurse departs triumphantly.

Hassan presently comes to life again, but he and Fatima are not long permitted to congratulate one another on the success of their scheme, for the arrival of the Calif with his wife is pompously announced. Both throw themselves on the divans, covering their faces, and thus the august couple believe them dead. The Calif, much afflicted by the sight, offers 1000 gold pieces to anyone, who can tell him, which of the two died first. No sooner does Hassan hear this than, tearing aside his facial covering, he throws himself at the Calif's feet, crying out: 'It was I, who died first!" at the same time craving the Calif's pardon together with the gold pieces. Fatima is also speedily resuscitated and the Calif pardons his favorites, Hassan meanwhile asserting, that he only died badly, in order to live better. Omar, who has paid their bills in the hope of winning Fatima's love, is driven away in disgrace.

Preciosa.

Lyric Drama in four acts. Libretto adapted by P. A. Wolff, from a novel by Cervantes.

Characters: Don Francesco de Carcano; Don Alonzo, his son; Don Fernando de Azvedo; Donna Clara, his wife; Don Eugenio, their son; Don Contreras; Donna Petronella; Captain of the Gypsies; Viarda, matron of the Gypsies; Preciosa, Lorenz, Sibastian, gypsies; Pedro, Castellan of Don Fernando; Fabio, inn-keeper; Ambrosio, a peasant.

Place, Spain. First produced at Berlin in 1821.

Though *Preciosa* in not an opera in the strict sense of the term, we may feel justified in admitting it among Weber's operas, as the music, which Weber wrote for it has alone given celebrity to Wolff's drama, which would otherwise have long been forgotten. This musical composition is justly called one of the German nation's lyrical jewels, and it undoubtedly shows all the best qualities of Weber's rich music. It was written after the *Freischütz,* and was completed in the incredibly short space of nine days.

The libretto is well done, the subject being both attractive and interesting to the hearer. The scene is laid in Spain. The first act introduces us to Madrid and takes us into the house of a noble Spaniard, named Don Francesco de Carcano. His son, Don Alonzo, has fallen desperately in love with a Bohemian girl, called Preciosa, whose beauty, virtue and charms are on everybody's lips. The father, wishing to know her, calls her before him and she comes with her people, enchanting the old nobleman as well as his son by her noble bearing and her exquisite songs.

The second act represents a forest with the gypsies' camp. Alonzo, who has told his father that he followed the army, but has in reality been seeking Preciosa, at

length finds her out and tries to win her. But though she returns his love, she is unwilling to follow him, and he resolves to link his fate with that of the Bohemians, in order to prove to Preciosa that his love is real and true. Dressed as a common hunter he follows his sweetheart, and the gypsies, who are all governed by Preciosa's will, swear never to betray him.

The third act introduces us into the castle of Don Azvedo in Valencia, a friend of Don Francesco's. The former is about to celebrate his silver wedding. Eugenio, his son, hearing that Preciosa is in the neighborhood, resolves to win her for his father's festival, having heard of the latter's delight at seeing the gypsy-girl in his friend's house at Madrid. Eugenio rouses the jealousy of Alonzo, who begins a quarrel which ends by Alonzo's being sent to prison.

The chief of the Bohemians and old mother Viarda, who see too late that they have come into dangerous grounds, break up their camp, but Preciosa, anxious about her lover, takes flight. She is caught by the chief, but, seizing Alonzo's gun, which was left lying under a tree, and threatening to fire if he does not obey her, she forces him to follow her into the castle.

The last act takes place in Azvedo's castle, where his wife, Donna Clara, touched by Preciosa's loveliness, is willing to assist her in liberating her lover. Meanwhile mother Viarda comes with the other gypsies to betray Alonzo's secret, asking one thousand scudi and her chief's liberty. At this moment the youth's father, Don Francesco, comes to offer his congratulations at the silver wedding of his friend. He finds his son, whom he pardons, Preciosa having for his sake agreed to re-

nounce her bridegroom. While bidding her hosts a sad farewell, Preciosa is so overcome by her feelings, that Donna Clara entreats her husband to buy the girl whom she believes to be a stolen child. Don Fernando explains to the Bohemians, that he has the right to liberate Preciosa, who has been taken in his grounds, if they should be unable to prove her gypsy descent. Old Viarda, finding that her schemes have fallen through, shows by a mark on Preciosa's shoulder, that the girl is Donna Clara's own daughter, who was stolen many years ago and was believed by her desolate parents to be drowned. In consideration of Preciosa's entreaties the gypsies are pardoned and only ordered to leave the country for ever. Preciosa is, of course, united to her faithful lover, Alonzo.

Der Freischütz.

Opera in three acts by Carl Maria von Weber. Libretto by Friedrich Kind.

Characters: Ottokar, Duke of Bohemia; Kuno, head ranger; Agatha, daughter of Kuno; Caspar and Max, rangers; Samiel, the black ranger; a hermit; Kilian, a rich peasant; a bridesmaid.

Time, period immediately after the Thirty Years' War. First produced at Berlin, in 1821.

In *Der Freischütz* Weber was at last in his true element. The plot of the opera is founded upon an old forest legend of a demon who persuades huntsmen to sell their souls in exchange for magic bullets which never miss their mark. Caspar, who is a ranger in the service of Prince Ottokar of Bohemia, had sold himself

to the demon Samiel. The day is approaching when his soul will become forfeit to the powers of evil, unless he can bring a fresh victim in his place. He looks around him for a possible substitute, and his choice falls upon Max, another ranger, who had been unlucky in the preliminary contest for the post of chief huntsman, and is only too ready to listen to Caspar's promise of unerring bullets. Max loves Agatha, the daughter of Kuno, the retiring huntsman, and unless he can secure the vacant post, he has little hope of being able to marry her. He agrees eagerly to Caspar's proposal, and promises to meet him at midnight in the haunted Wolf's Glen, there to go through the ceremony of casting the magic bullets.

Meanwhile Agatha is oppressed by forebodings of coming evil. The fall of an old picture seems to her a presage of woe, and her lively cousin Aennchen can do little to console her. The appearance of Max on his way to the Wolf's Glen, cheers her but little. He, too, has been troubled by strange visions, and as the moment of the rendezvous approaches his courage begins to fail. Nevertheless he betakes himself to the Glen and there, amidst scenes of the wildest supernatural horror, the bullets are cast in the presence of the terrible Samiel himself. Six of them are for Max, to be used by him in the approaching contest, while the seventh will be at the disposal of the demon. In the third act Agatha is discovered prepared for her wedding. She has dreamed that, in the shape of a dove, she was shot by Max, and she cannot shake off a sense of approaching trouble. Her melancholy is not dissipated by the discovery that, instead of a bridal crown, a funeral wreath has been pre-

pared for her. However, to console herself, she determines to wear a wreath of sacred roses, which had been given her by the hermit of the forest.

The last scene shows the shooting contest on which the future of Max and Agatha depends. Max makes six shots in succession, all of which hit the mark. At last, at the Prince's command, he fires at a dove which is flying past. Agatha falls with a shriek, but is protected by her wreath, while Samiel directs the bullet to Caspar's heart. At the sight of his associate's fate Max is stricken with remorse, and tells the story of his unholy compact. The Prince is about to banish him from his service, when the hermit appears and intercedes for the unfortunate youth. The Prince is mollified, and it is decided that Max shall have a year's probation, after which he shall be permitted to take the post of chief huntsman and marry Agatha.

Der Freischütz is, upon the whole, the most thoroughly characteristic of Weber's works. The famous passage for the horns, with which the overture opens, strikes the note of mystery and romance which echoes through the work. The overture itself is a notable example of that new beauty which Weber infused into the time-honored form. If he was not actually the first—for Beethoven had already written his "Leonore" overtures—to make the overture a picture in brief of the incidents of the opera, he developed the idea with so much picturesque power and imagination that the preludes to his operas remain the envy and despair of modern theatrical composers. The inspiration of *Der Freischütz* is drawn so directly from the German Volkslied, that at its production Weber was roundly accused of

plagiarism by many critics. Time has shown the folly of such charges.

Der Freischütz is German to the core, and every page of it bears the impress of German inspiration, but the glamour of Weber's genius transmuted the rough material he employed into a fabric of the richest art. Of the imaginative power of such scenes as the famous incantation it is unnecessary to speak. It introduced a new element into music, and one which was destined to have an almost immeasurable influence upon modern music. Weber's power of characterization was remarkable, as shown particularly in the music assigned to Agatha and Aennchen, but in this respect he was certainly inferior to some of his predecessors, notably to Mozart. But in imaginative power and in the minute knowledge of orchestral detail, which enabled him to translate his conceptions into music, he has never been surpassed among writers for the stage. Modern opera, if we may speak in general terms, may be said to date from the production of *Der Freischütz*.

Euryanthe.

Opera in three acts by Weber. Libretto founded on an old French story by Helmine von Chézy.

Characters: Louis VI.; Adolar, Count of Nevers; Euryanthe of Savoy, his bride; Lysiart, Count of Forest; Eglantine von Puiset, the captive daughter of a mutineer.

Place, Castle Preméry and Burg of Nevers. Time, 1110. First produced at Vienna, in 1821.

Operatic composers are too often dogged by a fate which seems to compel them to wed their noblest inspirations to libretti of incorrigible dullness, and Weber was even more unfortunate in this respect than his brethren of the craft. After *Der Freischütz,* the libretti which he took in hand were of the most unworthy description, and even his genius has not been able to give them immortality. *Euryanthe* was the work of Helmine von Chezy, the authoress of "Rosamunde," for which Schubert wrote his entrancing incidental music. Weber was probably attracted by the romantic elements of the story, the chivalry of mediæval France, the marches and processions, the pomp and glitter of the court, and overlooked the weak points of the plot. To tell the truth, much of the libretto of *Euryanthe* borders upon the incomprehensible.

The main outline of the story is as follows: At a festival given by the King of France, Count Adolar praises the beauty and virtue of his betrothed Euryanthe, and Lysiart, who also loves her, offers to wager all he possesses that he will contrive to gain her love. Adolar accepts the challenge, and Lysiart departs for Nevers, where Euryanthe is living. The second act discovers Euryanthe and Eglantine, an outcast damsel whom she has befriended. Englantine secretly loves Adolar, but extracts a promise from Lysiart, who has arrived at Nevers, that he will marry her. In return for this she gives him a ring belonging to Euryanthe, which she has stolen, and tells him a secret relating to a mysterious Emma, a sister of Adolar, which Euryanthe has incautiously revealed to her. Armed with these Lysiart returns to the court, and quickly persuades

Adolar and the King that he has won Euryanthe's affection. No one listens to her denials; she is condemned to death, and Adolar's lands and titles are given to Lysiart. Euryanthe is led into the desert to be killed by Adolar. On the way he is attacked by a serpent, which he kills, though not before Euryanthe has proved her devotion by offering to die in her lover's place.

Adolar then leaves Euryanthe to perish, declaring that he has not the heart to kill her. She is found in a dying condition by the King, whom she speedily convinces of her innocence. Meanwhle Adolar has returned to Nevers, to encounter the bridal procession of Eglantine and Lysiart. Eglantine confesses that she helped to ruin Euryanthe in the hope of winning Adolar, and is promptly stabbed by Lysiart. Everything being satisfactorily cleared up, Euryanthe conveniently awakes from a trance into which she had fallen, and the lovers are finally united.

Puerile as the libretto is, it inspired Weber with some of the finest music he ever wrote. The spectacular portions of the opera are animated by the true spirit of chivalry, while all that is connected with the incomprehensible Emma and her secret is unspeakably eerie. The characters of the drama are such veritable puppets, that no expenditure of talent could make them interesting; but the resemblance between the general scheme of the plot of *Euryanthe* and that of *Lohengrin* should not be passed over, nor the remarkable way in which Weber had anticipated some of Wagner's most brilliant triumphs, notably in the characters of Eglantine and Lysiart, who often seem curiously to foreshadow Ortrud and Telramund, and in the finale to the second act,

in which the single voice of Euryanthe, like that of Elizabeth in *Tannhäuser,* is contrasted with the male chorus.

Oberon, King of the Fairies.

Opera in three acts by Weber. Libretto adapted by Planché from Wieland's poem and an old French romance.

Characters: Oberon; Titania; Puck; Droll; Huon of Bordeaux; Scherasmin, his shield bearer; Harun al Raschid; Rezia, his daughter; Fatima, her slave; Namuna, Prince Babekan; Emir Almansor; Roschana, his wife; Nadine, their slave; Abdallah, a pirate; Mermaids.

First produced in London, in 1826.

Weber's last opera, *Oberon,* is one of the few works written in recent times by a foreign composer of the first rank for the English stage. The libretto, which was the work of Planché, is founded upon an old French romance, "Huon of Bordeaux," and though by no means a model of lucidity, it contains many scenes both powerful and picturesque, which must have captivated the imagination of a musician so impressionable as Weber. The opera opens in fairyland, where a bevy of fairies dance about the slumbering Oberon. The fairy king has quarrelled with Titania, and has vowed never to be reconciled to her until he shall find two lovers constant to each other through trial and temptation. Puck, who has been despatched to search for such a pair, enters with the news that Sir Huon of Bordeaux, who has accidentally slain the son of Charlemagne, has been commanded, in expiation of his crime, to journey

to Bagdad, to claim the Caliph's daughter as his bride, and slay the man who sits at his right hand.

Oberon forthwith throws Huon into a deep sleep, and in a vision shows him Rezia, the daughter of the Caliph, of whom the ardent knight instantly becomes enamored. He then conveys him to the banks of the Tigris, and giving him a magic horn, starts him upon his dangerous enterprise. In the Caliph's palace Huon fights with Babekan, Rezia's suitor, rescues the maiden, and with the aid of the magic horn carries her off from the palace, while his esquire, Sherasmin, performs the same kind office for Fatima, Rezia's attendant. On their way home they encounter a terrific storm, raised by the power of Oberon to try their constancy. They are ship-wrecked, and Rezia is carried off by pirates to Tunis, whilst Huon is left for dead upon the beach.

At Tunis more troubles are in store for the hapless pair. Huon, who has been transported by the fairies across the sea, finds his way into the house of the Emir, where Rezia is in slavery. There he is unlucky enough to win the favor of Roschana, the Emir's wife, and before he can escape from her embraces he is discovered by the Emir himself, and condemned to be burned alive. Rezia proclaims herself his wife, and she also is condemned to the stake; but at this crisis Oberon intervenes. The lovers have been tried enough, and their constancy is rewarded. They are transported to the court of Charlemagne, where a royal welcome awaits them.

Although written for England, *Oberon* never achieved much popularity in that, or, indeed, in any country. The fairy music is exqisite throughout, but the human interest of the story is after all slight, and Weber,

on whom the hand of death was heavy as he wrote the score, failed to infuse much individuality into his characters.

Spohr.

Louis Spohr (1784-1859) was celebrated both as a great violinist and as a composer. He was born at Brunswick, but his father soon afterwards settled as a physician at Seesen. At an early age he taught his son those accurate, methodical habits which became so characteristic of the composer. He soon showed his musical ability, and by the persuasion of a French *émigré* was sent to Brunswick to continue his musical studies, attending also the grammar school. At a school concert he played a concerto of his own composition, and so great was his success that he was called on to repeat it at a concert given by the Duke's band. At the early age of fourteen he started, by his father's desire, on a musical tour to Hamburg, armed with a few letters of introduction. But it was summer; all the leading inhabitants were in the country, and he was compelled to leave without gaining so much as a hearing. He returned to Brunswick with his means exhausted. The happy inspiration suddenly struck him of applying to the Duke, asking for the means to continue his studies and for a post in his orchestra. The Duke looked favorably on the petition, gave him the desired post, and subsequently placed him with Franz Eck, an able violinist, who was then traveling about Europe as a virtuoso. With him Spohr visited St. Petersburg, and profited greatly by his instruction. On his return to

Brunswick he had the good fortune to hear Rode, the famous French violinist, whose playing greatly influenced his style. He now began a series of musical tours, in which his performance was always received with marked favor. In 1805 he settled in Gotha as leader of the band, and in that city married his first wife, Dorette Scheidler, an excellent harpist, for whom he wrote both solos, and duets with the violin, which they played together on their numerous tours. His earliest compositions were for the violin, but he soon began to try works on a more extended scale, his first symphony appearing in 1809. His earliest and one of his best operas, *Faust,* first performed at Frankfort in 1818, at once achieved success, and made its way everywhere, keeping the boards for many years.

Faust was followed by *Zemire and Azor,* one air in which, "Rose softly blooming," is still popular. In 1820 he was in London, having been invited by the Philharmonic Society, and it is worthy of notice that he was the first to conduct with the baton in England. While there he produced two symphonies and his beautiful Nonetto for strings and wind. On his return, well pleased with his reception in England, and with the splendid playing of the Philharmonic Band, he stayed in Paris, making the acquaintance of Cherubini, who was so interested in Spohr's compositions that he made him play one of his quartets three times.

Spohr now settled in Dresden, gaining the esteem of Weber, who, when he was offered the post of capellmeister at Cassel, not wishing to leave Dresden, suggested Spohr as suitable for the office. Cassel thus became his home for the rest of his life. He was an

excellent conductor, and under him the performances at the Opera acquired a great reputation. There he produced his *Jessonda* with great enthusiasm. The year 1826 is memorable for the first performance of *The Last Judgment,* at the Rhine Festival in Dusseldorf, a work which still preserves its popularity in this country. In 1831 his famous *Violin-School* was published, which has remained a text-book and is known to every violinist.

In 1832, owing to political difficulties, the performances at the Opera were suspended. One of the most noticeable features of his rule at Cassel was the production of Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* in 1842, the music of which would not have seemed likely to commend itself to his tastes. It is possible that political sympathy may have been a factor in this result. After much opposition from the Elector, he succeeded in following this up by *Tannhäuser,* although he describes some of the music as "truly frightful;" but on *Lohengrin* the Elector put an absolute veto. In 1853 he was again in England, where he conducted his symphony *The Earthly and the Heavenly in Man's Nature* for a double orchestra at the New Philharmonic Concerts, as well as other works. In 1857 age was making inroads on his vigorous constitution, and, sorely against his will, he was pensioned. He died at Cassel on October 16, 1859, greatly esteemed by all who knew him.

Excellent and worthy man as he was, he had but little sympathy with the compositions of his contemporaries. Weber he was quite unable to appreciate; and he considered that Beethoven was wanting in æsthetic culture and sense of beauty. In fact, there was one

musician alone who conformed to his ideal, and that was Louis Spohr. It is this conviction which helps to make his Autobiography such delightful reading.

Spohr is now almost forgotten as an operatic composer, but at one time his popularity was only second to that of Weber. Many competent critics have constantly affirmed that a day will come when Spohr's operas, now neglected, will return to favor. But years pass, and there seems no sign of a revival of interest in his work. Yet he has a certain importance in the history of opera; for, so far as chronology is concerned, he ought perhaps to be termed the founder of the romantic school rather than Weber, since his *Faust* was produced in 1818, and *Der Freischütz* did not appear until 1821. But the question seems to turn not so much upon whether Spohr or Weber were first in the field, as whether Spohr is actually a romantic composer at all. If the subjects which he treated were all that need be taken into account, the matter could easily be decided.

No composer ever dealt more freely in the supernatural than Spohr. His operas are peopled with elves, ghosts, and goblins. Ruined castles, midnight assassins, and distressed damsels greet us on every page. But if we go somewhat deeper, we find that the real qualities of romanticism are strangely absent from his music. His form differs little from that of his classical predecessors, and his orchestration is curiously arid and unsuggestive; in a word, the breath of imagination rarely animates his pages. Yet the workmanship of his operas is so admirable, and his vein of melody is so delicate and refined, that it is difficult to help thinking

that Spohr has been unjustly neglected. His *Faust,* which has nothing to do with Goethe's drama, was popular in England fifty years ago; and *Jessonda,* which contains the best of his music, is still occasionally performed in Germany.

Jessonda.

Opera in three acts by Spohr. Libretto by Gehe.

Characters: Jessonda, widow of the Rajah; Amazili, her sister; Dandau, high priest of Brahma; Nadori, Brahmin; Tristan d'Acunha, Portuguese general; an East Indian officer.

Place, Goa. Time, Sixteenth century. First produced at Cassel, in 1823.

Spohr wrote this opera by way of inauguration as master of the court-chapel, at Cassel, and with it he added to the fame, which he had long before established as master of the violin and first-rate composer.

The story introduces us to Goa on the coast of Malabar at the beginning of the Sixteenth century. A Rajah has just died and is bewailed by his people, and Jessonda, his widow, who was married to the old man against her will, is doomed to be burned with him, according to the country's laws. Nadori, a young priest of the God Brahma, is to announce her fate to the beautiful young widow. But Nadori is not a Brahmin by his own choice. He is young and passionate, and, though it is forbidden to him to look at women, he at once falls in love with Jessonda's sister Amazili, whom he meets when on his sad errand. He promises to help her in saving her sister from a terrible death.

Jessonda, meanwhile, hopes vainly for the arrival of the Portuguese General, Tristan d'Acunha, to whom she pledged her faith long ago. She knows that the Portuguese are at this moment besieging Goa, which formerly belonged to them. Jessonda is accompanied by her women through the Portuguese camp. She is to wash away in the floods of the Ganges the last traces of earthliness.

Turning back into the town, she is recognized by Tristan, but alas, a truce forbids him to make an assault on the town in order to deliver his bride. Jessonda is led back in triumph by the High-priest, Dandau, to die an untimely death.

In the third act Nadori visits Tristan clandestinely to bring the welcome news that Dandau himself broke the truce by sending two spies into the enemy's camp to burn their ships. This act of treachery frees Tristan from his oath. Nadori conducts him and his soldiers through subterranean passages into the temple, where he arrives just in time to save Jessonda from the High-priest's sword. She gives him her hand and heart, and Nadori is united to her sister, Amazili.

Marschner.

Heinrich August Marschner was born August 16, 1795, at Zittau (Saxony), and died December 14, 1861, at Hanover. He attended the college at Zittau, and went (1813) to the Leipzig University in order to study law; but he soon gave himself up entirely to music, and had the advantage of Schicht as teacher. In 1816 he accompanied Count Thaddäus von Amadée to Vienna, where he made Beethoven's acquaintance, and, in 1817, received the post of music-teacher at Pressburg. He wrote there the operas *Der Kyffhäuserberg, Saidor,* and *Heinrich IV. und Aubigné.* The latter opera was produced at Dresden in 1820 by Weber.

In 1822 Marschner went to Dresden, where Weber received him in a friendly manner, and in 1824 procured him the post of musical director at the Opera. When Weber died in 1826, and Marschner saw no prospect of taking his place, he left Dresden and went to Leipzig as capellmeister of the theatre. There he wrote the operas, *Der Vampir* (1828) and *Der Templer und die Jüdin* (1829), which speedily made his name known, and which were produced at all the great theatres of Germany. In 1831 he received the post of court capellmeister at Hanover, and labored there for twenty-eight years, a favorite with the musicians, the actors and also

the public. In 1859 he received a pension with the title "Generalmusikdirector."

Marschner married three times: Eugenie Jäggi (1819, at Pressburg), who died early; Marianne Wohlbrück (1826, at Dresden), who was engaged as vocalist at Hamburg; and, finally the vocalist Therese Janda (really Jander; 1854, at Hanover), who survived him.

The titles of his numerous operas include: *Der Holzdieb* (1825, Dresden), *Lucretia* (1826, Danzig), *Des Falkner's Braut* (1832, Leipzig), *Das Schloss am Aetna* (1838, Berlin), *Der Bäbu* (1837, Hanover), *Adolf von Nassau* (1843, Hanover), *Austin* (1851, Hanover). He wrote, besides, music to Kleist's *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg,* to Kind's *Schön Ella,* to Hall's *Ali Baba,* etc. His last work was the opera *Hjarne,* produced at Frankfort in 1863.

Marschner, though not a pupil of Weber, was strongly influenced by his music, and carried on the traditions of the romantic school worthily and well. He was a man of vivid imagination, and revelled in uncanny legends of the supernatural. His works are performed with tolerable frequency in Germany, and still please by reason of their inexhaustible flow of melody and their brilliant and elaborate orchestration. *Hans Heiling,* his masterpiece, is founded upon a sombre old legend of the Erzgebirge. There is much in this strange story which suggests the legend of the Flying Dutchman, and, bearing in mind the admiration which in his early days Wagner felt for the works of Marschner, it is interesting to trace in *Hans Heiling* the source of much that is familiar to us in the score of *Der Fliegende Holländer. Templer and Judin,* founded upon Sir

Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe," is a fine work, suffering from a confused and disconnected libretto. *Der Vampir,* is a tale of unmitigated gloom and horror.

Hans Heiling.

Opera in three acts and a prologue by Heinrich Marschner. Libretto by Eduard Devrient.

Characters: The Queen of the spirits of the earth; Hans Heiling; Anna, his bride; Gertrud, her mother; Konrad, huntsman to the burgrave; Stephan and Nikolaus, peasants.

Place, the Hartz Mountains. Time, Sixteenth century. First produced at Hanover in 1833.

The text to this opera, which was written by the actor, Devrient, and sent to Marschner anonymously, so struck the composer by its beauty that he adapted music to it, music which ought to be heard much oftener on our stages, on account of its freshness and of its healthy dramatic action, which never flags, but continues to interest and move the hearer with ever-increasing effect till the end is reached.

According to the legend, Hans Heiling, King of the gnomes, has fallen in love with a daughter of the earth, the charming Anna. This maiden, a poor country-girl in the first freshness of youth, has been induced by her mother to consent to a betrothal with the rich stranger, whom she esteems, but does not love.

In the prelude we are introduced into the depths of earth, where the gnomes work and toil incessantly carrying glittering stones, gold and silver, and accumulating

all the treasures on which men's hearts are set. Their King announces to them that he will no longer dwell among them, and, therefore, resigns his crown. All the passionate entreatings of his mother and of the gnomes are of no avail. At the Queen's bidding he takes with him a magic book, without which he would lose his power over the gnomes, and after giving to her beloved son a set of luminous diamonds, mother and son part, Heiling with joy in his heart, the mother in tears and sorrow.

In the first act Heiling arises from the earth, for ever closing for him the entrance to the gnomes. Anna greets him joyously and Gertrud, her mother, heartily seconds the welcome. Heiling gives to his bride a golden chain, and Anna, adorning herself, thinks with pleasure how much she will be looked at and envied by her companions. She begs Heiling to visit a public festival with her, but Heiling, by nature serious and almost taciturn, refuses her request. Anna pouts, but she soon forgets her grief when she sees the curious signs of erudition in her lover's room. Looking over the magic book, the leaves begin to turn by themselves, quicker and quicker, the strange signs seem to grow, to threaten her, until stricken with fear Anna cries out, and Heiling, turning to her, sees too late what she has done. Angry at her curiosity, he pushes her away, but she clings to him with fervent entreaties to destroy the dreadful book. His love conquers his reason; and he throws the last link which connects him with his past into the fire. A deep thunder-peal is heard. Anna thanks him heartily, but from this hour the seed of fear and distrust grows in her heart.

Heiling, seeing her still uneasy, agrees to visit the festival with her upon condition that she refrains from dancing. She gladly promises, but as soon as they come to the festival, Anna is surrounded by the village lads, who entreat her to dance. They dislike the stranger, who has won the fairest maiden of the village, and Conrad, the hunter, who has long loved Anna, is particularly hard on his rival. He mocks him, feeling that Heiling is not what he seems, and tries to lure Anna away from his side. At last Heiling grows angry, forbidding Anna to dance. She is wounded by his words, and telling him abruptly that she is not married yet, and that she never will be his slave, she leaves him. In despair Heiling sees her go away with Conrad, dancing and frolicking.

In the second act we find Anna in the forest. She is in a deep reverie. Her heart has spoken, but alas, not for her bridegroom, whom she now fears. It only beats for Conrad, who has confessed his love to her. Darkness comes on and the gnomes appear with their Queen, who reveals to the frightened girl the origin of her bridegroom and entreats her to give back the son to his poor bereft mother. When the gnomes have disappeared, Conrad overtakes Anna, and she tells him all, asking his help against her mysterious bridegroom. Conrad, seeing that she returns his love, is happy. He has just obtained a good situation and will now be able to wed her.

He accompanies her home, where Gertrud welcomes them joyously, having feared that Anna had met with an accident in the forest. While the lovers are together, Heiling enters, bringing the bridal jewels.

Mother Gertrud is dazzled, but Anna shrinks from her bridegroom. When he asks for an explanation, she tells him that she knows of his origin. Then all his hopes die within him, but determined that his rival shall not be happy at his cost, he hurls his dagger at Conrad and takes flight.

In the last act Heiling is alone in a ravine in the mountains. He has sacrificed everything and gained nothing. Sadly he decides to return to the gnomes. They appear at his bidding, but they make him feel that he no longer has any power over them, and by way of adding still further to his sorrows they tell him that his rival lives and is about to wed Anna. Then indeed all seems lost to the poor dethroned King, but the gnomes, seeing that he really has abandoned all earthly hopes, swear fealty to him once more and return with him to their Queen, by whom he is received with open arms.

Meanwhile Conrad, who only received a slight wound from Heiling's dagger and has speedily recovered, is about to marry Anna. But when Anna looks about her, Heiling is at her side, come to take revenge. Conrad endeavors to aid her, but his sword breaks before it touches Heiling, who invokes the help of his gnomes. They appear, but at the same moment the Queen is seen, exhorting her son to pardon and to forget. He willingly follows her away into his kingdom of night and darkness, never to see earth's surface again.

The Templar and the Jewess.

Opera in three acts by Marschner. Libretto adapted by Wohlbrück from Walter Scott's romance, *Ivanhoe.*

Characters: Cedric, a Saxon knight; Wilfrid of Ivanhoe his son; Rowena, his ward; Beaumanoir, grand master of the Templars; Brian de Bois Guilbert, templar; Maurice de Bracy; Albert Malvoisin; the Black Knight; Locksley, chief of the outlaws; Wamba, Cedric's servant; Oswald, Cedric's steward; Robert, shield bearer of Bois Guilbert; Elgitha, Rowena's maid; Friar Tuck, hermit; Isaac of York, a Jew; Rebecca, his daughter.

Place, county of York, England. Time, 1194. First produced at Leipzig in 1829.

In the opening scene of the opera we are introduced to the Knight-Templar, Brian de Bois Guilbert, who has fallen in love with the beautiful Jewess, Rebecca, and has succeeded in capturing and detaining her in his castle. At the same time, Sir Cedric of Rotherwood, a Saxon knight (father of Ivanhoe, whom he has disinherited), has been taken captive with his ward, the Lady Rowena, by their enemies, the Normans. Rebecca refuses to hear the Templar's protestations of love, and threatens to precipitate herself from the parapet, if he dares to touch her. When the opportunity offers itself, Ivanhoe, the wounded knight to whom Rebecca is assigned as nurse, tells her that friends have come to deliver them all.

The outlaws, commanded by Richard Cœur de Lion, under the guise of the Black Knight, assault the castle, burn it and deliver the captives. Poor Rebecca alone falls into the hands of the Templar, who does not cease to press his suit. Brian's deed soon becomes known, and his brother-Templars, believing Brian to be innocent, but led astray by a sorceress, condemn Rebecca to

the stake. She makes use of her right to ask for a champion, and is allowed till sunset to find one. Brian himself tries all he can to save her, but she rejects his aid, for she loves Ivanhoe, though she is well aware that this noble knight loves his beautiful cousin, Rowena.

The sun is about to set, the funeral pile awaits its victim, and no champion appears. The trumpets sound for the last time, when Ivanhoe presents himself in the lists to fight Brian, whom the Templars have appointed as his adversary. Ivanhoe is victorious; Brian falls lifeless, even before the enemy's sword touches him. All recognize the judgment of God and Rebecca is given back to her desolate father. At the last moment King Richard, who has long been absent on a crusade to Jerusalem, appears on the scene. He announces that henceforth he alone will govern the land and punish all injustice. Ivanhoe and Rowena are united by consent of Sir Cedric, who is now wholly reconciled to his valorous son.

The Vampire.

Opera in four acts by Marschner. Libretto by Wohlbrück.

Characters: Sir Humphry; Malvina, his daughter; Edgar Aubrey, a relative; Lord Ruthven; Sir Berkley; Ianthe, his daughter; George Dibdin, in the service of Humphry; John Perth, bailiff of the earl of Marsden; Emmy, his daughter; Gadshill, Blunt, Scrope and Green, countrymen; Suse, wife of Blunt.

Place, Scotland. Time, Seventeenth Century. First produced at Leipzig in 1828.

The libretto was adapted from Lord Byron's tale of the same name, and was written by Marschner's own brother-in-law. The scene is laid in Scotland in the seventeenth century, and illustrates the old Scottish legend of the Vampire, a phantom-monster which can only exist by sucking the heart-blood of sleeping mortals.

Lord Ruthven is such a Vampire. He victimizes young maidens in particular. His soul is sold to Satan, but the demons have granted him a respite of a year, on condition of his bringing them three brides. His first victim is Ianthe, daughter of Sir John Berkley. She loves the monster and together they disappear into a cavern. Her father assembles followers and goes in search of her. They hear dreadful wailings, followed by mocking laughter proceeding from the ill-fated Vampire, and entering they find Ianthe lifeless. The despairing father stabs Ruthven, who, wounded to death, knows that he cannot survive but by drawing life from the rays of the moon, which shines on the mountains. Unable to move, he is saved by Edgar Aubey, a relative to the Laird of Davenant, who accidentally comes to the spot. Lord Ruthven, after having received a promise of secrecy from Aubrey, tells him who he is, and implores him to carry him to the hills as the last favor to a dying man.

Aubrey complies with the Vampire's request, and then hastily flies from the spot. Ruthven revives, and follows him in order to win the love of Malvina, daughter of the Laird of Davenant and Aubrey's betrothed. His respite now waxing short, he tries at the same time to gain the affections of Emmy, the daughter of the bailiff, John Perth.

Malvina meanwhile greets her lover, Aubrey, who has returned after a long absence. Both are full of joy, when Malvina's father enters to announce to his daughter that he has chosen the Earl of Marsden as her future husband. Great is Malvina's disappointment, and she now for the first time dares to tell her father that her heart has been given to Aubrey. The Laird's pride, however, prevents him from retracting his word, and when the Earl of Marsden arrives, he presents him to his daughter. In the supposed Earl, Aubrey at once recognizes Lord Ruthven, but the villain stoutly denies his identity, maintaining that Lord Ruthven is his brother, who has been traveling for a long time. Aubrey, however, recognizes the Vampire by a scar on his hand, but he is bound to secrecy by his oath, and so Ruthven triumphs, having the Laird of Davenant's promise that he will be betrothed before midnight to Malvina, as he declares that he is bound to depart for Madrid the following morning as Ambassador.

In the second act all are drinking and frolicking on the green, where the wedding is to take place. Emmy awaits her lover, George Dibdin, who is in Davenant's service. While she sings the ghastly romance of the Vampire, Lord Ruthven approaches, and by his sweet flattery and promise to help the lovers, he easily causes the simple maiden to grant him a kiss in token of her gratitude. In giving this kiss she is forfeited to the Evil One. George, who has seen all, is very jealous, though Emmy tells him that the future son-in-law of the Laird of Davenant will make him his steward.

Meanwhile Aubrey vainly tries to make Ruthven re-

nounce Malvina. Ruthven threatens that Aubrey himself will be condemned to be a Vampire, if he breaks his oath, and depicts in glowing colors the torments of a spirit so cursed. While Aubrey hesitates as to what he shall do, Ruthven once more approaches Emmy, and succeeds in winning her consent to follow him to his den, where he murders her.

In the last scene Malvina, unable any longer to resist her father's will, has consented to the hateful marriage. Ruthven comes very late to his wedding. Aubrey implores them to wait for the coming day, but in vain. Then he forgets his own danger, and only sees that of Malvina, and when Ruthven is leading the bride to the altar, he loudly proclaims Ruthven to be a Vampire. At this moment a thunder-peal is heard, and a flash of lightning destroys Ruthven, whose time of respite has ended at midnight. The old Laird, witnessing Heaven's punishment, repents his error and gladly gives Malvina to her lover.

Evolution of the Singspiel.

Weber and Marschner show the German romantic school at its best; for the lesser men, such as Hoffmann and Lindpaintner, did little but reproduce the salient features of their predecessors more or less faithfully. The romantic school is principally associated with the sombre dramas, in which the taste of that time delighted; but there was another side to the movement which must not be neglected. The Singspiel, established by Hiller and perfected by Mozart, had languished during the early years of the century, or rather had fallen into the hands of composers who were entirely unable to do justice to its possibilities. The romantic movement touched it into new life, and a school arose which contrived by dint of graceful melody and ingenious orchestral device to invest with real musical interest the simple stories in which the German middle-class delights. The most successful of these composers were Kreutzer and Lortzing.

Kreutzer.

Konradin Kreutzer was born on November 22, 1780, at Mösskirch (Baden), and died December 14, 1849, at Riga. After the death of his father (1800) he devoted himself entirely to music. He started for Vienna,

but remained for some years in Constance. In 1804, however, he arrived in Vienna, where he became the pupil of Albrechtsberger. He was unable to bring out his grand operas *Konradin von Schwaben* and *Der Taucher,* but he had a gratifying success with his *Æsop in Phrygien* (1808) and *Jery und Bätely* (1810). A performance of the opera, *Konradin,* at Stuttgart (1812) procured for him the post of capellmeister at the Württemberg court. He afterwards wrote several new operas for Stuttgart, and went in 1817 to Donaueschingen as capellmeister to Prince von Fürstenberg.

In 1822 he returned to Vienna, produced there his *Libussa,* and was, with several intervals, capellmeister at the "Karntnerthor" Theatre from 1825-1840, and from 1833-37 filled the same position at the Josephstadt Theatre. From 1840-46 he was capellmeister at Cologne, and from 1846-49 again at Vienna, in place of Nicolai. For the sake of his daughter, Cecilia, whom he trained as an opera-singer, he went to Riga, where he died.

Das Nachtlager von Granada.

Opera in two acts by Konradin Kreutzer. Libretto by Karl von Braun.

Characters: Gabriela; Gomez, a young shepherd; a huntsman; Ambrosio, an old shepherd, uncle of Gabriela; Vasco and Pedro, shepherds; Count Otto, a German knight.

Place, Spain. Time, Sixteenth century. First produced at Vienna in 1834.

Kreutzer was a prolific composer, writing in all thirty operas, but the only one of his operas which can honestly be said to have survived to our times is *Das Nachtlager von Granada.* This tells the tale of an adventure which befell the Prince Regent of Spain. While hunting in the mountains he falls in with Gabriela, a pretty peasant maiden who is in deep distress. She confides to him that her affairs of the heart have gone awry. Her lover, Gomez, the shepherd, is too poor to marry, and her father wishes her to accept the Crœsus of the village, a man whom she detests. The handsome huntsman—for such she supposes him to be—promises to intercede for her with his patron, the Prince, and when her friends and relations, a band of arrant smugglers and thieves, appear, he tries to buy their consent to her union with Gomez by means of a gold chain which he happens to be wearing.

The sight of so much wealth arouses the cupidity of the knaves, and they at once brew a plot to murder the huntsman in his sleep. Luckily Gabriela overhears their scheming, and puts the Prince upon his guard. The assassins find him prepared for their assault, and ready to defend himself to the last drop of blood. Fortunately matters do not come to a climax. A body of the Prince's attendants arrive in time to prevent any bloodshed, and the opera ends with the discomfiture of the villains and the happy settlement of Gabriela's love affairs.

Kreutzer's music is for the most part slight, and occasionally borders upon the trivial, but several scenes are treated in the true romantic spirit, and some of the concerted pieces are admirably written.

Lortzing.

Gustav Albert Lortzing was born in 1801 at Berlin, where his father was engaged as an actor. He studied for a time under Rungenhagen, but the lessons soon came to an end, as the father wandered from theatre to theatre in various German towns. Lortzing learned, nevertheless, to play on several orchestral instruments, and began at an early age to compose. At the same time he appeared on the stage in children's *rôles,* and was trained as a singer and actor.

In 1823 he married the actress Regina Ahles. In 1824 he produced at Cologne his first small opera, *Ali Pascha von Janina,* accepted in 1826 an engagement at the Detmold Theatre, and soon made a name as an actor. In 1833 he was engaged by Director Ringelhardt as tenor singer at Leipzig. Previously, two of his vaudevilles, *Der Pole und sein Kind* and *Szene aus Mozart's Leben,* had made the round of the German theatres. Then followed, in 1837, *Die beiden Schützen,* an opera which was well received by the public. *Zar und Zimmermann,* produced shortly afterwards, was coolly received at Leipzig, but, on the other hand, was enthusiastically applauded at Berlin.

After several operatic failures he produced, in 1842, *Der Wildschütz,* without doubt his most original work, though at first it did not make much of a sensation. For a short time in 1844 Lortzing acted as theatre capellmeister at Leipzig. He quarelled with the management, and after that led a wandering life which was embittered by anxiety for the maintenance of his numerous family. He produced *Undine* at Hamburg

(1845), which soon found its way to other stages, and he had great success at Vienna (Theatre an der Wien, 1846) with *Der Waffenschmied,* and at Leipzig with *Zum Grossadmiral* (1847) and *Die Rolandsknappen* (1849). Once more he received an appointment at Leipzig, but fell out with the management again as on the first occasion, and finally spent the last years of his life, wearied both in body and mind, as capellmeister at the Friedrich-Wilhelmstadt Theatre, Berlin. His last works were *Die Berliner Grisette* (farce) and *Die Opernprobe* (operetta). An opera (*Regina*), a vaudeville (*Der Weihnachtsabend*), and the music to Benedix's *Drei Edelsteine* were discovered among his manuscripts after his death. He died at Berlin on January 21, 1851.

Lortzing was a more gifted composer than Kreutzer, and several of his operas are still exceedingly popular in Germany. His strongest points are a clever knack of treating the voices contrapuntally in concerted pieces, and a humorous trick of orchestration, two features with which English and American audiences have become pleasantly familiar in Sir Arthur Sullivan's operas, which works, indeed, owe not a little to the influence of Lortzing and Kreutzer.

Die Beiden Schützen.

Opera in three acts by Lortzing. Libretto adapted by the composer from the French vaudeville, *Les deux grenadiers.*

Characters: Wall, bailiff; Caroline, his daughter;

William, his son, soldier in the First Battalion of the Guards, under the name of Wilhelm Stark; Peter, his cousin; Busch, inn-keeper; Süschen, his daughter; Gustav, his son, soldier in the Third Battalion of the Guards. Dame Lieblich, housekeeper; Schwarzbart, dragoon; Barsch, corporal.

Place, a small town. First produced at Leipzig in 1837, under the title of *Die Beiden Tornister.*

Die Beiden Schützen was composed in the year 1837. The libretto is of French origin. The scene takes place in a little country-town, where we find Busch, a wealthy inn-keeper, making preparations for the arrival of his only son. The young man had entered a Grenadier regiment at the age of sixteen, ten years before, and the joyful event of his home-coming is looked forward to with pleasure by his father and sister Süschen, but with anxiety by a friend of hers, Caroline, to whom young Busch had been affianced before joining his regiment.

Enter two young Grenadiers from the regiment on leave, the younger of whom falls in love with Süschen at first sight. However, as the elder Grenadier, Schwarzbart, dolefully remarks, they are both almost penniless, and he considers how he can possibly help them in their need.

His meditations are interrupted by the arrival of the landlord, who, seeing the two knapsacks, and recognizing one of them as that of his son, naturally supposes the owner to be his offspring, in which belief he is confirmed by Schwarzbart, who is induced to practice this deceit, partly by the desire of getting a good dinner and the means of quenching his insatiable thirst, and

partly by the hope of something turning up in favor of his companion in arms, Wilhelm. As a matter of fact the knapsack does not belong to Wilhelm at all. On leaving the inn, at which the wedding banquet of one of their comrades had been held, the knapsacks had inadvertently been exchanged much to Wilhelm's dismay, as his own contained a lottery ticket which, as he has just learned, had drawn a great prize.

The supposed son is of course received with every demonstration of affection by his fond parent, but though submitting with a very good grace to the endearments of his supposed sister—the maiden, with whom he had fallen in love so suddenly—he resolutely declines being hugged and made much of by the old landlord, this double-dealing being entirely distasteful to his straightforward nature. Nor does he enjoy the attentions of Caroline, who is supposed to be his affianced bride, as his affections are placed elsewhere.

In the next act Peter, a youth of marvelous stupidity, and a cousin of the bailiff, presents himself in a woful plight, to which he has been reduced by some soldiers at the aforesaid wedding festivities, and shortly after Gustav, the real son, appears on the scene. He is a manly fellow, full of tender thoughts for his home. He is greatly surprised at finding himself repulsed by his own father, who not recognizing him, believes him to be an imposter. All the young man's protestations are of no avail, for in his knapsack are found the papers of a certain Wilhelm Stark, for whom he is now mistaken. Gustav, being considered insane, is shut up in a large garden-house of his father's, as the small town lacks a prison.

In the third act the Magistrate has found out that Wilhelm's papers prove him to be the bailiff's son, who, as a child had been entrusted to the care of a clergyman, and who, after the death of the bailiff's wife was vainly sought for by his father. Of course, this changes everything for the prisoner, who is suddenly received most graciously by his gruff guardian, Barsch, and does not know what to make of his mysterious hints.

Meanwhile Caroline's heart has spoken for the stranger who had addressed her so courteously and chivalrously. She feels that, far from being an impostor, he is a loyal and true-hearted young fellow, and, therefore, decides to liberate him. At the same time enter Wilhelm with Schwarzbart, followed by Peter—all in search of Süschen. Gustav, (the prisoner), hearing footsteps, blows out the candle, in order to save Caroline from being recognized, and so they all run about in the dark, playing hide and seek in an infinitely droll manner. At last the bailiff, having heard that his son has been found, comes in with the inn-keeper. The whole mystery is cleared up, and both sons embrace their respective fathers and brides.

Czar und Zimmermann.

Opera in three acts by Lortzing. Libretto by the composer.

Characters: Peter I, Czar of Russia, under the name of Peter Michaelow, a journeyman carpenter; Peter Ivanow, a young Russian, journeyman carpenter; Van Bett, Burgomaster of Sardam; Marie, his niece; General Lefort, Russian ambassador; Lord Syndham,

English ambassador; Marquis of Chateauneuf, French ambassador; Widow Brown; an Officer.

Place, Sardam. Time, 1698. First produced at Leipzig in 1837.

The music of Czar and Zimmermann is exceedingly bright and tuneful, and the orchestration is most effective.

The libretto was adapted by Lortzing from an old comedy. The scene is laid at Sardam, where Peter the Great is working in a shipyard under the assumed name of Peter Michaelow. Among his companions is another Peter, named Ivanow, a Russian renegade, who has fallen in love with Mary, the niece of the burgomaster, Van Bett. The two Peters being countrymen, and fearing discovery, have become friendly, but Ivanow instinctively feeling his friend's superiority, is jealous of him, and Mary, a little coquette, fans the flame of his passion.

Meanwhile the ambassadors of France and England, each of whom is seeking a special alliance with the Czar of Russia, have discovered his whereabouts, and both bribe the conceited simpleton, Van Bett, who tries to find out the real Peter. Van Bett assembles the people, but there are many Peters amongst them, though only two strangers. He asks the strangers whence they came, then takes aside Peter Ivanow, cross-questioning him in vain as to what he wishes to know.

At last, being aware of Peter's love for Mary, he gives him some hope of gaining her hand, and obtains in exchange a promise from the young man to confess his secret in presence of the foreign nobleman. The cunning French ambassador, the Marquis de Chateau-

neuf, has easily found out the Czar, and gained his purpose, while the phlegmatic English Lord, falsely directed by the burgomaster, is still investigating Ivanow. All this takes place during a rural festivity, where the Marquis, notwithstanding the claims upon his attention, finds time to court the coquettish Mary, exciting Ivanow's hate and jealousy.

Ivanow with difficulty plays the role of Czar, whom he is believed to be both by Lord Syndham and Van Bett. He well knows that he is in danger of punishment, if he is found out by either of them. The burgomaster, getting more and more confused, and fearing himself surrounded by spies and cheats, examines one of the strangers after the other, and is, of course, confounded to hear their high-flown names. At last he is about to seize the two Peters, when he is deterred from his purpose by the two ambassadors. The Russian General Lefort, arrives to call back his Sovereign to his own country.

In the third act Van Bett has prepared a solemn demonstration of fealty for the supposed Czar, whom he still mistakes for the real one, while the real Czar has found means to go on board of his ship with the Marquis and Lefort. Before taking farewell, he promses a passport to Ivanow, who is very dubious as to what will become of him. Meanwhile Van Bett approaches with his procession to do homage to Ivanow, but during his long and confused speech cannon-shots are heard and an usher announces that Peter Michaelow is about to sail away wth a large crew. The background opens and shows the port with the Czar's ship. Everybody bursts into shouts of "Long Live the Czar!"

and Ivanow, opening the paper, which his high-born friend left for him, reads that the Czar has granted him pardon for his desertion and has bestowed upon him a considerable sum of money.

Der Wildschütz.

Opera in three acts by Lortzing. Libretto adapted from Kotzebue's comedy, "The Roebuck," by the composer.

Characters: Count of Eberbach; the Countess, his wife; Baron Kronthal, her brother; Baroness Freimann, a young widow, sister of the count; Nanette, her maid; Baculus, schoolmaster; Gretchen, his bride; Pankratius, steward.

Place a German castle and adjoining village. Time, 1803. First produced at Leipzig in 1842.

The music of this opera is so fresh, so full of gaiety and of charming melodies, that it might be compared with Lortzing's *Zar und Zimmermann,* if only the text were as well done. Unhappily it lacks all the advantages which characterize the opera just named, as the libretto is frivolous, without possessing the grace and *esprit,* which distinguish French compositions of a similar kind. Nevertheless the good music prevails over the bad text, and the opera holds its own on the German stage.

In the opening scene it is made known that a schoolmaster, Baculus by name, has had the misfortune unintentionally to shoot a roe-buck, belonging to the forest of his master, Count of Eberbach. Baculus, who is on the eve of his wedding with a young girl, named

Gretchen, is greatly worried when his unlucky shot results in a summons to the castle, where he is looked upon as a poacher, and is in danger of losing his position. His bride offers to entreat the Count to pardon him, but the jealous schoolmaster will not allow this. In this embarrassing position the Baroness Freimann, a young widow appears, disguised in the attire of a student, and accompanied by her chambermaid, Nanette, who is dressed as her valet. Hearing of the schoolmaster's misfortune, she proposes to put on Gretchen's clothes and to crave the Count's pardon in the disguise of the bride. Baculus gladly accepts the student's proposal and accompanies him to the castle. Everybody is charmed by the graces and naiveté of the country-girl. The Count tries to make love to her, while Baron Kronthal, who is present, is so much enamored that he thinks of marrying her despite her low birth.

Kronthal is the Countess of Eberbach's brother, but she does not know him as such, though she feels herself greatly attracted by him. In order to save the girl from persecution, the Countess takes her into her room. Meanwhile the Count offers the sum of 5000 thalers to Baculus for the renunciation of his bride. The schoolmaster accepts the offer, thinking that the Count wishes to win the real Gretchen. By arousing the latter's vanity, he succeeds in turning her affection to the Count, but is greatly perplexed, when the Count rejects his bride and scornfully asks for the other Gretchen.

Baculus avows at last that the latter is a disguised student. Baron Kronthal, full of wrath, asks for satisfaction, the student having passed the night in his sister's room. In explanation of this circumstance the

others for the first time hear that the Countess is the Baron's sister, and that the student is the Baroness Freimann, sister of the Count of Eberbach. Everybody is content, for the Count, who was detected in the act of kissing the country-girl, declares, that with him it was the voice of nature that spoke, and the Countess, to whom he now presents Kronthal as her brother, makes a like statement. The unhappy Baculus receives full pardon from the Count, on condition that he will henceforth teach the children of the village, instead of shooting game.

Undine.

Opera in four acts by Lortzing. Libretto adapted by the composer from Fouqué's tale of *Undine*.

Characters: Berthalda, daughter of Duke Heinrich; Hugo of Ringstetten; Kühleborn, a mighty water-spirit; Tobias, an old fisherman; Martha, his wife; Undine, her foster daughter; Father Heilman; Veit, Hugo's shield-bearer; Hans, cellarer.

Place, Act I., a fishing village; Act II., Reichstadt; Act III., castle of Ringstetten. First produced at Hamburg in 1845.

With this opera Lortzing for the first time tried his genius in another field. Until then he had only composed comic operas, which had met with a very fair measure of success, but in this opera he left the comic for the romantic and was peculiarly happy both in his ideas and choice of subject. The first representation of Undine at Hamburg in the year 1845 was a great triumph for the composer.

According to Fouqué's tale the gallant knight, Hugo

von Ringstetten has been ordered by the Duke's daughter, Berthalda, to go in search of adventures, accompanied by his attendant, Veit. Being detained for three months in a little village cut off from communication with the outer world by an inundation, he sees Undine, the adopted daughter of an old fisherman, named Tobias, and, falling in love with her, asks for her hand. In the first act we see the priest uniting the young couple. Hugo recognizes in the old man a traveler, whom he once saved from robbers, and is glad to see him. Undine behaves most childishly and finally declares that she has no soul. Hugo now tells them of the proud and beautiful Berthalda, whose scarf he received in a tournament, and who sent him away on this adventure. He then returns to the Capital with his young wife, in order to present her at the Ducal court. Meanwhile Veit has met Kühleborn, the mighty King of the water-fairies, and is asked by him, whether his master has quite forgotten Berthalda. The valet gives as his opinion that the poor fisher-maiden is deceived, and will soon be abandoned by her husband. This excites Kühleborn's wrath, for Undine is his daughter, and he forthwith resolves to protect her.

In the second act Undine confesses to her husband, that she is a water-fairy, one of those, whom men call "Undinas." They have no soul, but if they are loved faithfully by man, they are able to gain a soul and through it immortality. Though he shudders inwardly, Undine's purity and loveliness conquer Hugo's fright, and he once more swears to be eternally true to her.

The proud Berthalda, who loves Hugo, has heard with feelings of mingled anger and despair of the

knight's marriage. She determines to bestow her hand on the King of Naples; but before her wedding takes place, a sealed document has to be opened, which says that Berthalda, instead of being a Duke's daughter, is a poor foundling. Kühleborn, who is present, declares that she is the real child of Undine's fosterparents. Berthalda is now obliged to leave the palace. She loathes her fate and curses her low-born parents. Then Kühleborn derides her and the attendants are about to seize him, in order to turn him out-of-doors, when the statue of the water-god breaks into fragments, while Kühleborn stands in its place, the water pouring down upon him. All take flight, but Undine raises the prostrate Berthalda, promising her protection in her husband's castle.

In the third act Berthalda succeeds in again attracting Hugo. Though warned by the water-fairies, he neglects their advice and Undine finds him in the arms of her rival. He repels his wife, and Kühleborn takes her back into his watery kingdom. But Undine has lost her peace of mind forever. She cannot forget Hugo.

In the fourth act Hugo has given orders to close the well with stones to prevent all possible communication with the water-fairies. Undine's pale face pursues him everywhere. He continually fancies he hears her soft voice and touching entreaties, and to stifle his remorse he appoints the day of his wedding with Berthalda. His attendant Veit, however, unable to forget his charming mistress, removes the stones, which cover the well. Undine rises from the well and appears at midnight at the wedding. Hugo, forgetting

Berthalda, and drawn towards his lovely wife against his will, falls appealingly at her feet. The castle comes crashing down, floods penetrate everywhere, and carry Hugo and Undine into Kühleborn's crystal palace. Undine obtains pardon for Hugo, and his only punishment is that he must forever stay with his wife in her fairy domains.

Der Waffenschmied.

Comic opera in three acts by Lortzing. Libretto by the composer.

Characters: Hans Stadinger, armorer and veterinarian; Marie, his daughter; Count von Liebenau; George, his shield-bearer; Adelhof, a knight of Suabia; Irmentraut, Marie's governess; Brenner, inn-keeper.

Place, Worms. Time, Sixteenth century. First produced at Leipzig in 1846.

Though this opera does not equal in value Lortzing's "Czar and Zimmermann," it has nevertheless proved an admirable addition to the operatic repertory. It is attractive both on account of the freshness of its melodies and the popular character of its music and text.

The scene is located in Worms, in the Sixteenth century. The Count of Liebenau has fallen in love with Mary, the daughter of a celebrated armorer, named Stadinger, and in order to win her, he woos her in the guise of a smith-journeyman, named Conrad. He then woos her in his own rank. Mary, who cannot permit herself to think of love in connection with a person of such exalted rank as a Count, at last confesses that she loves the poor smith, Conrad. Rejoiced at this confession, the Count nevertheless, pretends to be jealous.

But Stadinger, who more than once showed the door to the Count, will not accept either of the suitors, the Count being too high-born, and his journeyman, Conrad, being too bad a laborer, though he had once saved Mary's life.

In order to withdraw her from the reach of her lovers, the armorer resolves to wed his daughter to his second journeyman, George, who is no other than the Count's valet. Stadinger is determined to present him as Mary's bridegroom on the occasion of a festival, which is to take place in the course of the afternoon, and on which Stadinger's jubilee as master of armorers is to be celebrated. But as George decidedly refuses to marry the armorer's daughter, he gives her at last to Conrad. Great is Mary's surprise and her father's wrath, when they discover that the Count and simple Conrad are one and the same person, but at last the old father yields, and the lovers receive his benediction.

Flotow.

Friedrich Freiherr von Flotow was born April 27, 1812. He was the son of a landed nobleman of the arch-duchy of Mecklenburg and was educated with a view to the diplomatic service. In 1827 he went to Paris, and heard excellent music. The brilliant artistic life into which he was thrown aroused him to a consciousness of his own talent for music, and he devoted himself to a course of study under Reicha. The Revolution of 1830 drove him away for a time, but feeling that the atmosphere of Paris was necessary to his success, he soon returned, and produced his first

dramatic attempts at the private houses of some of the aristocracy.

Stradella was brought out at the Palais Royal as a short *pièce lyrique* in 1837; but Flotow's first public success was at the Théatre de la Renaissance, where he produced, May 31, 1839, *Le Naufrage de la Méduse,* which ran for 53 nights during the year, and at once established his position. He afterwards re-wrote the piece, and produced it at Hamburg in 1845 as *Die Matrosen.*

Meantime he had composed for the Paris theatres several other operas, such as *L'esclave de Camoëns* (1843), and *L'âme en peine* (1846). *Stradella* was rewritten as an opera, and brought out at Hamburg, December 30, 1844, and has had extraordinary success throughout Germany. It was followed by *Martha* (Vienna, November 25, 1847), which was remodelled from a ballet written in conjunction with Burgmüller and Deldevez in 1844, and in its new form quickly spread all over the world.

Flotow has never surpassed these two operas, and of his later operas *Die Grossfürstin* (1850), *Indra* (1853), *Rübezahl* (1854), *Hilda* (1855), *Der Müller von Meran* (1856), *La Veuve Grapin* (1859), *L'Ombre* (1869), *Naïda* (Milan, 1873), *Il Flor d'Harlem* (Turin, 1876), the only ones which have attained any general popularity, are *Indra, La Veuve Grapin,* and *L'Ombre,* the last of which was very successful.

In 1856 Flotow was appointed Intendant of the Court theatre at Schwerin, a post which he retained till 1863. The only important works he produced during this period, when he had so many inducements to com-

pose, were a *Fackeltanz* and some charming music to Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*. After giving up the management of the theatre in 1863 he returned to Paris. In 1864 Flotow was elected corresponding member of the Institut de France.

In 1868 Flotow settled permanently on an estate near Vienna, spending the season sometimes in Vienna, sometimes in Paris, or making a stay in Italy. The Court Opera at Vienna produced *Die Libelle* (ballet, 1866); the Darmstadt Opera produced the ballet *Tannkönig* (1867); and at Prague he brought out the opera *Am Runenstein* (1868, jointly with Genée).

His last works were *L'enchanteresse* (a revision of *Indra*) and *Rosellana* (posthumous). Flotow's music is French rather than German; the rhythm is graceful and piquant, while the plain, easily comprehensible melodies form its most essential feature. *Martha* and *Stradella* are truly popular. Besides operas, Flotow wrote some chamber music works and small vocal pieces, but none of them were in any way striking.

The great success of *Stradella* and *Martha* must be mainly ascribed to the melodies which pervade them, and to their light and attractive character. Flotow's comic talent was considerable, and he had great natural instinct for the stage. His early French experience taught him the virtue of lively and well-accentuated rhythm, and gave him dexterity in the construction of extended pieces, to which he wrote pleasing harmony and piquant orchestration. On the other hand, his music has rarely anything below the surface, his rhythm frequently degenerates into that of mere dance-tunes, his modulations are poor, and he is prone to senti-

mentality. In the scientific part of composition he, too, often betrays the amateur. On the whole the conclusion is forced upon us that, in spite of his popularity, Flotow will not live in the history of dramatic music.

Alessandro Stradella.

Opera in three acts by Flotow. Libretto adapted from the French by Friedrich.

Characters: Alessandro Stradella, singer; Bassi, a wealthy Venetian; Leonore, his ward; Malvolio and Barbarino, bandits; Pupils of Stradella, masked personages, servants, etc.

Place, Venice and vicinity of Rome. Time, Seventeenth century. First produced at Hamburg in 1844.

The libretto abounds in romantic interest, without being over-sensational. Stradella, the celebrated Venetian singer, has fallen in love with Leonore, ward of a rich Venetian citizen named Bassi. She returns his love, but is strictly guarded by her uncle, who wants to marry her himself. Stradella succeeds in receiving Bassi and aided by his friend carries her off during the Carnival.

In the second act we find the lovers in a little village near Rome, where they are married by a priest. Malvolio, a bandit, has sought them by Bassi's orders, and discovers their refuge. Entering the villa, he meets with another bandit, in whom he recognizes his friend, Barbarino, sent, as it turns out, on the same errand. They decide to coöperate in killing Stradella, and to carry his wife back to her guardian. Under the mask

of pilgrims going to a sacred festival, they find a kindly shelter in Stradella's house, and are so captivated by his fine voice, as well as by the charm of his noble behavior, that they wholly abandon their evil purpose.

In the third act Bassi appears, and not finding his order executed, offers such a large sum of gold to the banditti, that they at length promise to stab Stradella during his next singing performance. While they lie in wait for him, Stradella sings the hymn of the Holy Virgin's clemency towards sinners so touchingly, that his pursuers cast their swords away and sink on their knees, joining in the refrain. Full of astonishment Stradella learns of the danger in which he had been, but in the end he willingly pardons not only the banditti but also his wife's uncle, who, won over like the ruffians by the power of Stradella's song, humbly asks for the Singer's friendship, which is granted to him. The people lead their favorite in triumph to the festival, which he helps to glorify with his wondrous voice.

Martha.

Opera in four acts by Flotow. Libretto adapted from the French by Friedrich.

Characters: Lady Harriet Durham, maid of honor to the queen; Nancy, her confidante; Lord Tristan, her cousin; Plunkett, a rich country gentleman; the judge of Richmond; three maids and three servants.

Place, the castle of Lady Harriet, near Richmond. Time, Reign of Queen Anne. First produced at Vienna in 1847.

This opera firmly established the renown of its composer, who had first found his way to public favor through *Stradella.* The libretto is both amusing and interesting. Lady Harriet Durham, tired of the pleasures and splendors of Court, determines to seek elsewhere for a pastime, and hopes to find it in a sphere different from her own. Disguised as peasant girls, Lady Harriet, and her confidante, Nancy, visit the Fair at Richmond, accompanied by Lord Tristan, who is hopelessly enamored of Lady Harriet and unwillingly complies with her wish to escort them in the attire of a peasant. They join the servant-girls, who are there to seek employment, and are hired by Plunkett, and his foster-brother, Lionel, a youth of somewhat extraordinary behavior, his air being noble and melancholy and much too refined for a country-squire, while Plunkett, though somewhat rough, is frank and jolly in his manner.

The disguised ladies take the handsel from them, without knowing that they are bound by it, until the sheriff arrives to confirm the bargain. Now the joke becomes reality, and they hear that they are actually hired as servants for a whole year. Notwithstanding Lord Tristan's protestations, the ladies are carried off by their masters, who know them under the names of Martha and Julia.

In the second act we find the ladies in the company of Plunkett and Lionel, who set them to work. Of course, they are totally ignorant of household work, and as their wheels will not go round, Plunkett shows them how to spin. Lionel has lost his heart to Lady Harriet and proposes to her. Though she is pleased by his court-

liness, she is by no means willing to accept a country squire and wounds him by her mockery. Meanwhile Plunkett wishes to propose to Nancy, but she hides herself, and at last the girls are sent to bed very anxious and perplexed at the turn their adventure has taken. But Lord Tristan comes to their rescue in a coach and they take flight, vainly pursued by the tenants. Plunkett swears to catch and punish them, but Lionel sinks into deep melancholy, from which nothing can arouse him.

In the third act we meet them at a Court-hunt, where they recognize their hired servants in two of the ladies who have joined in the hunt. They assert their right, but the ladies disown them haughtily, and when Lionel, whose reason almost gives way under the burden of grief and shame, which overwhelms him at thinking himself deceived by Martha, tells the whole story to the astonished Court, the ladies pronounce him insane and Lord Tristan sends him to prison for his insolence, notwithstanding Lady Harriet and Nancy's plea for his pardon. Lionel gives a ring to Plunkett, asking him to show it to the Queen, his dying father having told him that it would protect him from every danger.

In the fourth act Lady Harriet feels remorse for the sad consequences of her haughtiness. She visits the prison to crave Lionel's pardon. She tells him that she has herself carried his ring to the Queen and that he has been recognized by it as the son of Lord Derby. She also informs him that his father had been banished from court on charges that have since proved to be utterly false. Then Lady Harriet offers hand and heart to Lionel, but he rejects her, believing himself

duped. Lady Harriet, however, who loves Lionel, resolves to win him against his will. She and Nancy, in the former peasant's attire, go once more to the Fair at Richmond, where Lionel is also brought by his friend Plunkett. Martha promises to renounce all splendors and live only for him. Then his melancholy vanishes. Lionel ultimately marries Martha, his name and possessions being restored to him, while Plunkett obtains the hand of Nancy, alias Julia.

Nicolai.

Otto Nicolai was born at Königsberg, June 9, 1810. His home was unhappy and his education neglected, except for the piano, which he was well taught. At sixteen he ran away, but found a protector in Justizrath Adler, of Stargard, who assisted him in his studies, and in 1827 sent him to Berlin, where he took lessons from Zelter and Klein. In 1833 the Chevalier de Bunsen sent for him to Rome as organist to the chapel of the Prussian Embassy, and there, under Baini, he studied the ancient Italian masters, without neglecting those of modern date. Towards the close of 1837 he went to Vienna, and became Capellmeister and singing-master of the court opera, returning to Rome in October, 1838. He then composed a series of operas in the prevailing taste of the day. *Enrico Secondo* and *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* (1839) were given at Trieste, and *Il Templario* (1840) with great success at Turin; but *Odoardo e Gildippe* (Genoa) and *Il Proscritto* (Milan) were not so well received.

In 1841 he became the first Capellmeister of the court opera at Vienna, and remained till Easter 1847, highly appreciated as a conductor. Here were produced his *Templario* (1841), and *Die Heimkehr des Verbannten* (1844), a remodelling of *Il Proscritto.*

With the avowed object of giving first-rate performances of Beethoven's Symphonies, he founded the Philharmonic concerts, the first of which took place March 28, 1842. A mass (composed 1843) dedicated to Frederic William IV, and a Fest-ouverture for the Jubilee of the University of Königsberg (1844) led to his appointment as director of the newly-founded Domchor, and Court-Capellmeister of the opera in Berlin, and he gave a farewell concert in the large Redoutensaal at Vienna (April 1, 1847), at which Jenny Lind sang, and some of the instrumental music in "Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor" was produced for the first time. He completed that opera in Berlin, and the first performance took place on March 9, 1849, with brilliant success, which he did not live to enjoy, as he expired of apoplexy on May 11th.

The Merry Wives of Windsor was given in Vienna (with recitatives by Proch), February 12, 1852, and in London (as *Falstaff*), May 3, 1864, and holds its place as one of the most popular of comic operas. In New York it was sung in German at the Thalia Theatre in 1885, and at the Metropolitan Opera House during the season of 1899-1900. It was sung in English at the New York Academy of Music in 1886.

Nicolai had a fine collection of Italian and German scores, which he left to the Imperial library at Berlin. He was an honorary member of the Societa Cecilia of Rome and of the Filarmonici of Bologna. The Tonkünstler-Verein of Berlin erected in 1851 a monument over his grave in the churchyard of Dorotheenstadt.

The Merry Wives of Windsor.

Opera in three acts by Otto Nicolai. Libretto from Shakespeare's comedy by Mosenthal.

Characters: Sir John Falstaff; Fluth; his wife; Reich; his wife; Anna, their daughter; Fenton; Younker Spärlich; Dr. Caius.

Place, Windsor. Time, Seventeenth Century. First produced in Berlin in 1849.

As may be readily inferred from the title, the whole amusing story is adapted from Shakespeare's comedy. Falstaff has written love-letters to the wives of two citizens of Windsor, Mrs. Fluth and Mrs. Reich. They discover his duplicity and decide to punish the infatuated old fool. Meanwhile Mr. Fenton, a nice but poor young man, asks for the hand of Miss Anna Reich, but her father has already chosen a richer suitor for his daughter in the person of silly Mr. Spärlich.

In the following scene Sir John Falstaff is amiably received by Mrs. Fluth, when suddenly Mrs. Reich arrives, telling them that Mr. Fluth will be with them at once, having received notice of his wife's doings. Falstaff is packed into a washing-basket and carried away from under Mr. Fluth's nose by two men, who are bidden to put the contents in a canal near the Thames, and the jealous husband, finding nobody, receives sundry lectures from his offended wife.

In the second act Mr. Fluth, mistrusting his wife, makes Falstaff's acquaintance, under the assumed name of Bach, and is obliged to hear an account of the

amorous Knight's gallant adventure with his wife and its disagreeable issue. Fluth persuades Falstaff to give him a rendezvous, swearing inwardly to punish the old coxcomb for his impudence. In the evening Miss Anna meets her lover Fenton in the garden, and ridiculing her two suitors, Spärlich and Dr. Caius, a Frenchman, she promises to remain faithful to her lover. The two others, who are hidden behind some trees, must perforce listen to their own dispraise.

When the time has come for Falstaff's next visit to Mrs. Fluth, who, of course, knows of her husband's renewed suspicion, Mr. Fluth surprises his wife and reproaches her violently with her conduct. During this controversy Falstaff is disguised as an old woman, and when the neighbors come to help the husband in his search, they find only an old deaf cousin of Mrs. Fluth's who has come from the country to visit her. Nevertheless, Falstaff gets a good thrashing from the duped and angry husband.

In the last act everybody is in the forest, preparing for the festival of Herne the hunter. All are masked, and Sir John Falstaff, being led on by the two merry wives, is surprised by Herne (Fluth), who sends the whole chorus of wasps, flies and mosquitoes on to his broad back. They torment and punish him, till he loudly cries for mercy. Fenton in the mask of Oberon has found his Anna in Queen Titania, while Dr. Caius and Spärlich, mistaking their masks for Anna's, sink into each other's arms, much to their mutual discomfiture.

Mr. Fluth and Mr. Reich, seeing that their wives are innocent and that they only made fun of Falstaff, are

quite happy, and the whole scene ends with a general pardon.

Otto Nicolai was an excellent musician, and the captivating melody of this genial little work is supplemented by excellent concerted writing and thoroughly sound orchestration.

Mendelssohn, Schubert and Schumann.

To this period belong the operas written by three composers who in other branches of music have won immortality, although their dramatic works have failed to win lasting favor. *Die Hochzeit des Camacho,* the boyish opera of Felix Mendelssohn—Bartholdy (1809-1847), is too inexperienced a work to need more than a passing word, and his Liederspiel *Heimkehr aus der Fremde* is little more than a collection of songs; but the finale to his unfinished *Lorelei* shows that he possessed genuine dramatic power, and it must be a matter for regret that his difficulties in fixing on a libretto prevented his giving anything to the permanent repertory of the stage.

* * *

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) wrote many works for the stage—romantic operas like *Fierrabras* and *Alfonso und Estrella,* operettas like *Der häusliche Krieg,* and farces like *Die Zwillingsbrüder.* Most of them were saddled by inane libretti, and though occasionally revived by enthusiastic admirers of the composer, only prove that Schubert's talent was essentially not dramatic, however interesting his music may be to musicians.

* * *

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) only made scant contribution to the history of the opera. It had always

been his wish to write a German opera. The usual difficulty of a suitable subject stood in his way. He at last decided on the legend of St. Genevieve, which had been treated dramatically by Tieck and Hebbel.

The poet Reinick was persuaded to undertake the duty of arranging from these materials a book suitable for operatic treatment. The result did not commend itself to Schumann, and he himself undertook the work of librettist. The music was completed in August, 1848, but it was not till June 25, 1850, after the usual vexations inherent in matters theatrical, that the opera was produced at Leipzig under the title of *Genoveva*. The reputation of the composer ensured a crowded house at the first performance, but the work was only a *succès d'estime*. To the composer this was a great disappointment, some solace for which he found in the reception given to his *Faust* music, which was performed at Dresden, Leipzig and Weimar, to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of Goethe's birth. His music to Byron's Manfred also belongs to this period.

Genoveva.

Opera in four acts by Schumann. Libretto adapted from Tieck and Hebbel.

Characters: Bishop Hidulfus; Count Siegfried; Genoveva; Golo; Margaretha; Drago; Balthasar; Caspar and Angelo, servants in Count Siegfried's castle; Conrad, Siegfried's attendant; knights, priests, pages, peasants, etc.

Place, Siegfried's castle, Strassburg, and German forest. First produced at Leipzig in 1850.

According to the old legend of Genoveva, Siegfried, Count of the Palatinate, is ordered by the Emperor Charles Martell to join him in the war with the infidels, who broke out of Spain under Abdurrhaman. The noble Count recommends his wife Genoveva and all he possesses to the protection of his friend, Golo, who is, however, secretly in love with his master's wife. After Siegfried has said farewell she falls into a swoon, which Golo takes advantage of to kiss her. Genoveva finally awakes and goes away to mourn in silence for her husband.

Golo being alone, an old hag Margaretha, whom he takes for his nurse, comes to console him. She is in reality his mother and has great schemes for her son's future happiness. She insinuates to him that Genoveva, being alone, needs consolation and will easily be led on to accept more tender attentions, and she promises him her assistance. The second act shows Genoveva's room. She longs sadly for her husband, and sees with pain and disgust the insolent behavior of the servants, whose wild songs penetrate into her silent chamber. Golo enters to bring her the news of a great victory over Abdurrhaman, news which fills her heart with joy. Golo then makes love to her. Genoveva, however, repulses him with words of scorn which turn his love for her into hate.

When Drago, the faithful steward, comes to announce that the servants begin to be more and more insolent, daring even to insult the good name of the Countess, Golo asserts that they speak the truth about her. He persuades the incredulous Drago to hide him-

self in Genoveva's room, after she has retired for the night.

Margaretha tells Golo that Count Siegfried lies wounded at Strassburg. She has intercepted his letter to the Countess, and prepares to leave for that town, in order to nurse the Count and kill him slowly by some deadly poison. Then Golo calls quickly for the servants, who all assemble to penetrate into the room of their mistress. Genoveva repulses them with indignation, but at last she yields, and herself taking the candle to light the room proceeds to search, when Drago is found behind the curtains, and at once silenced by Golo, who runs his dagger through his heart. Genoveva is led into the prison of the castle.

The third act takes place at Strassburg, where Siegfried is being nursed by Margaretha. His strength defies her perfidy, and he is full of impatience to return to his loving wife, when Golo enters bringing him the news of her faithlessness. Siegfried in despair bids Golo kill her with his own sword. He decides to fly into the wilderness, but before fulfilling his design goes once more to Margaretha, who has promsed to show him all that passed at home during his absence. He sees Genoveva in a magic looking-glass, exchanging kindly words with Drago, but there is no appearance of guilt in their intercourse. The third image shows Genoveva sleeping on her couch, and Drago approaching her. With an imprecation Siegfried starts up, bidding Golo avenge him, but at the same instant the glass flies in pieces with a terrible crash, and Drago's ghost stands before Margaretha, commanding her to tell Siegfried the truth.

In the fourth act Genoveva is being led into the

wilderness by two ruffians, who have orders to murder her. Before the crime is committed, Golo approaches her once more, showing her Siegfried's ring and sword, with which he has been ordered to kill her. He tries hard to win her, but she turns from him with scorn and loathing, preferring death to dishonor. At length relinquishing his attempts, he beckons to the murderers to do their work and hands them Count Siegfried's weapon. Genoveva in her extreme danger seizes the cross of the Savior, praying fervently, and detains the ruffians till at the last moment Siegfried appears, led by the repentant Margaretha. There ensues a touching scene of forgiveness, while Golo rushes away to meet his deserved fate by throwing himself over a precipice.

The music of *Genoveva* cannot be said to be undramatic; on the contrary, Schumann often realizes the situations with considerable success: but he had little power of characterization, and all the characters sing very much the same kind of music. This gives a feeling of monotony to the score, which is hardly dispelled even by the many beauties with which it is adorned. Nevertheless *Genoveva* has been revived in several German towns of late years, and its music has always met with much applause from connoisseurs, though it is never likely to be generally popular.

Italian Opera in the Last Century.

While Weber was reconstructing opera in Germany and laying the foundations upon which the vast structure of modern lyrical drama was afterwards reared by the composers of our own day, reforms, or at any rate innovations, were being introduced into Italian opera by a musician scarcely less gifted even than the founder of the romantic school himself. Rossini (1792-1868) owes but little of his fame to instruction or study, for just as soon as he had been assured by his master that he knew enough of the grammar of music to write an opera, he relinquished his studies once for all, and started life as a composer. In this perhaps he showed his wisdom, for his natural gifts were of such a nature as could scarcely have been enhanced by erudition, and the mission which he so amply fulfilled in freeing his national art from eighteenth-century convention was certainly not one which depended upon a profound knowledge of counterpoint. Nature had fortunately endowed him with precisely the equipment necessary for the man who was to reform Italian opera. The school of Paisiello, notwithstanding its many merits, had several grievous weaknesses, of which the most prominent were uniformity of melodic type, nerveless

and conventional orchestration, and intolerable prolixity. Rossini brought to his task a vein of melody as inexhaustible in inspiration as it was novel in form, a natural instinct for instrumental color, and a firm conviction that brevity was the soul of wit.

He leaped into fame with *Tancredi,* which was produced in 1813 and established his reputation as a composer of opera seria. In opera buffa, a field in which his talents shone even more brilliantly, his earliest success was made with *L'Italiana in Algeri* (1813), which was followed in 1815 by the world-famous *Barbiere di Siviglia.* This was originally produced in Rome under the name of *Almaviva,* and, strangely enough, proved an emphatic failure. For this, however, the music was scarcely responsible. The people of Rome were at that time devotees of the music of Paisiello, and resented the impertinence of the upstart Rossini in venturing to borrow a subject which had already been treated by the older master. *Il Barbiere* soon recovered from the shock of its unfriendly reception, and is now one of the very few of Rossini's works which have survived to the present day. The story is bright and amusing and the music brilliant and exhilarating, but it is to be feared that the real explanation of the continued success of the little opera lies in the opportunity which it offers to the prima donna of introducing her favorite *cheval de bataille* in the lesson scene.

The music is a delightful example of Rossini in his gayest and merriest mood. It sparkles with wit and fancy, and is happily free from those concessions to the vanity or idiosyncrasy of individual singers which do so much to render his music tedious to modern ears.

Of Rossini's lighter works, *Il Barbiere* is certainly the most popular, though, musically speaking, it is perhaps not superior to *La Gazza Ladra,* which, however, is saddled with an idiotic libretto.

None of his tragic operas except *Guillaume Tell,* which belongs to a later period, have retained their hold upon the affections of the public. Nevertheless there is so much excellent music in the best of them, that it would not be strange if the course of time should bring them once more into favor, provided always that singers were forthcoming capable of singing the elaborate *fioriture* with which they abound.

Perhaps the finest of the serious operas of Rossini's Italian period is *Semiramide,* a work which is especially interesting as a proof of the strong influence which Mozart exercised upon him. The plot is a Babylonian version of the story of Agamemnon, telling of the vengeance taken by Arsaces, the son of Ninus and Semiramis, upon his guilty mother, who, with the help of her paramour Assur, had slain her husband. Much of the music is exceedingly powerful, notably that which accompanies the apparition of the ghost of Ninus (although this is evidently inspired by *Don Giovanni*), and the passionate scene in which the conscience-stricken Assur pours forth his soul in tempest. More thoroughly Italian in type is *Mosé in Egitto,* a curious though effective version of the Biblical story, which is still occasionally performed as an oratorio, a proceeding which naturally gives little idea of its real merits. In 1833 it was actually given under the proper conditions, as a sacred opera, strengthened by a generous infusion

of Handel's *Israel in Egypt,* under the direction of Rophino Lacy.

It would be an idle task to give even the names of Rossini's many operas. Suffice it to say that between 1810 and 1828 he produced upwards of forty distinct works. In 1829 came his last and greatest work, *Guillaume Tell,* which was written for the Grand Opéra in Paris. The libretto was the work of many hands, and Rossini's own share in it was not a small one. It follows Schiller with tolerable closeness.

Guillaume Tell is not only indisputably Rossini's finest work, but it also gives convincing proof of the plasticity of the composer's genius. Accustomed as he had been for many years to turning out Italian operas by the score—graceful trifles enough, but too often flimsy and conventional—it says much for the character of the man that, when the occasion arrived, he could attack such a subject as that of Tell with the proper seriousness and reserve. He took what was best in the style and tradition of French opera and welded it to the thoroughly Italian fabric with which he was familiar. He put aside the excessive ornamentation with which his earlier works had been overladen, and treated the voices with a simplicity and dignity thoroughly in keeping with the subject. The choral and instrumental parts of the opera are particularly important; the latter especially have a color and variety which may be considered to have had a large share in forming the taste for delicate orchestral effects for which modern French composers are famous. *Guillaume Tell* was to have been the first of a series of five operas written for the Paris Opera by special arrange-

ment with the government of Charles X. The revolution of 1830 put an end to this scheme, and a few years later, finding himself displaced by Meyerbeer in the affections of the fickle Parisian public, Rossini made up his mind to write no more for the stage.

He lived for nearly forty years after the production of *Guillaume Tell,* but preferred a life of ease and leisure to entering the lists once more as a candidate for fame. What the world lost by this decision it is difficult to say; but if we remember the extraordinary development which took place in the style and methods of Wagner and Verdi, we cannot think without regret of the composer of *Guillaume Tell* making up his mind while still a young man to abandon the stage forever. Nevertheless, although much of his music soon became old-fashioned, Rossini's work was not unimportant. The invention of the cabaletta, or quick movement, following the cavatina, or slow movement, must be ascribed to him, an innovation which has affected the form of opera, German and French, as well as Italian, throughout this century. Even more important was the change which he introduced into the manner of singing *fioriture* or florid music. Before his day singers had been accustomed to introduce cadenzas of their own to a great extent when they liked. Rossini insisted upon their singing nothing but what was set down for them. Naturally he was compelled to write cadenzas for them as elaborate and effective as those which they had been in the habit of improvising, so that much of his Italian music sounds empty and meaningless to our ears. But he introduced the thin edge of the wedge, and although even to the days

of Jenny Lind singers were occasionally permitted to interpolate cadenzas of their own, the old tradition that an opera was merely an opportunity for the display of individual vanity was doomed.

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The music of Donizetti (1798-1848) is now paying the price of a long career of popularity by enduring a season of neglect. His tragic operas, which were the delight of opera-goers in the fifties and sixties, sound cold and thin to modern ears. There is far more genuine life in his lighter works, many of which still delight us by their unaffected tunefulness and vivacity. Donizetti had little musical education, and his spirit rebelled so strongly against the rules of counterpoint that he preferred to go into the army rather than to devote himself to church music. His first opera, *Enrico di Borgogna,* was produced in 1818, and for the next five-and-twenty years he worked assiduously, producing in all no fewer than sixty-five operas.

Lucia di Lammermoor (1835), which was for many years one of the most popular works in the grand opera repertory, has now sunk to the level of a mere prima donna's opera, to be revived once or twice a year in order to give a popular singer an opportunity for vocal display. Yet there are passages in it of considerable dramatic power, and many of the melodies are fresh and expressive. The plot is founded upon *The Bride of Lammermoor,* but it is Scott's tragic romance seen through very Italian spectacles indeed.

Less sombre than *Lucia,* and quite as tuneful, is *Lucrezia Borgia,* once a prime favorite with opera-

goers, but now rarely heard. There is little attempt at dramatic significance in the music of *Lucrezia Borgia,* but the score bubbles over with delicious and wholly inappropriate melodies. Occasionally, as in the final scene, there is a touch of pathos, and sometimes some rather effective concerted music; but, for the most part, Donizetti was content to write his charming tunes, and to leave all expression to the singers. The orchestration of his Italian operas is primitive in the extreme, and amply justifies Wagner's taunt about the 'big guitar.' In works written for foreign theatres Donizetti took more pains, and *La Favorite,* produced in Paris in 1840, is in many ways the strongest of his tragic works.

La Favorite is more carefully written than was Donizetti's wont, and some of the concerted music is really dramatic. There is a tradition that the last act, which was an afterthought, was written in an incredibly short space of time, but it is significant that the beautiful romanza 'Spirito gentil,' to which the act and indeed the whole opera owes most of its popularity, was transferred from an earlier and unperformed work, *Le Duc d'Albe.* It would be waste of time to describe the music of any other serious works by this composer. Many of them, such as *Betly, Linda di Chamonix,* and *Anna Bolena,* were successful when produced; but Donizetti aimed merely at satisfying the prevailing taste of the day, and when a new generation sprang up with different sympathies from that which had preceded it, the operas which had seemed the most secure of popularity were soon consigned to oblivion. It is a significant fact that Donizetti's

lighter works have stood the test of time more successfully than his more serious efforts. Though the grandiose airs and sham tragedy of *Lucia* have long since ceased to impress us, we can still take pleasure in the unaffected gaiety of *La Fille du Régiment* and *Don Pasquale*. These and many similar works were written *currente calamo*, and though their intrinsic musical interest is of course very slight, they are totally free from the ponderous affectations of the composer's serious operas. Here we see Donizetti at his best, because here he writes according to the natural dictates of his imagination, not in accordance with the foolish or depraved taste of fashionable connoisseurs.

Even slighter in scope is *Don Pasquale*, a brilliant trifle, written for the Théatre des Italiens in Paris, and there sung for the first time in 1843, by Grisi, Mario, Tamburini, and Lablache.

The music of *L'Elisir d'Amore* is not inferior to that of *Don Pasquale* in sparkle and brilliancy, but the plot is tame and childish compared to the bustle and intrigue of the latter work. To this inferior plot is allied some of the most delightful music Donizetti ever wrote. Fresh, graceful, and occasionally tender, it forms the happiest contrast to the grandiose nonsense which the composer was in the habit of turning out to suit the vitiated taste of the day, and is a convincing proof that if he had been permitted to exercise his talent in a congenial sphere, Donizetti would be entitled to rank with the most successful followers of Cimarosa and Paisiello, instead of being degraded

to the rank of a mere purveyor to the manufacturers of barrel-organs.

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Different as was the talent of Bellini (1802-1835) from that of Donizetti, his fate has been the same. After holding the ear of Europe for many years, he has fallen at the present time completely into the background, and outside the frontiers of Italy his works are rarely heard. Bellini had no pretensions to dramatic power. His genius was purely elegiac in tone, and he relied entirely for the effect which he intended to produce upon the luscious beauty of his melodies, into which, it must be admitted, the great singers of his time contrived to infuse a surprising amount of dramatic force.

The story of *La Sonnambula* is rather foolish, but it suited Bellini's idyllic style, and the work is perhaps the happiest example of his *naïf* charm. Bellini's music is quite the reverse of dramatic, but the melodies throughout *La Sonnambula* are graceful and tender, and in the closing scene he rises to real pathos.

In *Norma* Bellini had the advantage of treating a libretto of great power and beauty, the work of the poet Romani, a tragedy which, both in sentiment and diction, contrasts very strongly with the ungrammatical balderdash which composers are so often called upon to set to music.

It would be too much to assert that Bellini has risen to the level of his noble subject, but parts of his score have a fervor and a dignity which might scarcely have been expected from the composer of *La Sonnam-*

bula. We may smile now at the trio between Pollio and his two victims, in which the extremes of fury and indignation are expressed by a lilting tune in 9-8 time, but it is impossible to deny the truth and beauty of Norma's farewell to her children, and in several other scenes there are evidences of real dramatic feeling, if not of the power to express it. It is important to remember, in discussing the works of Bellini and the other composers of his school, that in their day the art of singing was cultivated to a far higher pitch of perfection than is now the case. Consequently the composer felt that he had done his duty if, even in situations of the most tragic import, he provided his executant with a broad, even melody. Into this the consummate art of the singer could infuse every gradation of feeling. The composer presented a blank canvas, upon which the artist painted the required picture.

Unlike that of *Norma,* the libretto of *I Puritani,* Bellini's last opera, is a dull and confused affair. The scene is laid in England, apparently at the time of the Civil War, but the history and chronology throughout are of the vaguest description.

I Puritani is in some respects Bellini's best work. Foolish as the libretto is, the bitterest opponent of Italian *cantilena* could scarcely refuse to acknowledge the pathetic beauty of many of the songs. It is a matter for regret, as well as for some surprise, that Bellini's works should now be banished from the operatic repertory, while so many inferior operas are still retained. In an age of fustian and balderdash, Bellini stood apart, a tender and pathetic figure, with no

pretensions to science, but gifted with a command of melody as copious, unaffected, and sincere as has ever fallen to the lot of a composer for the stage.

* * *

The other Italian writers of this period may be briefly dismissed, since they did little but reproduce the salient features of their more famous contemporaries in a diluted form. Giuseppe Mercadante (1797-1870) lived to an advanced age, and wrote many operas, comic and serious, of which the most successful was *Il Giuramento,* a gloomy story of love and revenge, treated with a certain power of the conventional order, and a good deal of facile melody. Antonio Pacini (1796-1867) is principally known by his *Saffo,* an imitation of Rossini which achieved a great success. Niceolo Vaccai (1790-1848) also imitated Rossini, but his *Giulietta e Romeo* has intrinsic merits, which are not to be despised.

* * *

After the time of Rossini, opera buffa fell upon evil days. Although the most famous musicians of the day did not disdain occasionally to follow in the footsteps of Cimarosa, for the most part the task of purveying light operas for the smaller theatres of Italy fell into the hands of second and third rate composers. Donizetti, as we have seen, enriched the repertory of opera buffa with several masterpieces of gay and brilliant vivacity, but few of the lighter works of his contemporaries deserve permanent record.

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The brothers Ricci, Luigi (1805-1859) and Federico

(1809-1877), wrote many operas, both singly and in collaboration, but *Crispino e la Comare* is the only one of their works which won anything like a European reputation. The story is a happy combination of farce and *féerie*. The music is brilliant and sparkling, and altogether the little opera is one of the best specimens of opera buffa produced in Italy after the time of Rossini. The other men who devoted themselves to opera buffa during this period may be briefly dismissed. Carlo Pedrotti (1817-1893), whose comic opera *Tutti in Maschera,* after a brilliant career in Italy, was successfully produced in Paris, and Antonio Cagnoni (1828-1896), were perhaps the best of them. A version of the latter's *Papa Martin* was performed in London in 1875, under the name of *The Porter of Havre.*

FRA DIAVOLO

Photogravure reproduction of the original painting

ZERLINDA. *Fie, sir!—You shouldn't bolt into people's rooms in this manner.*

LORENZO. *Forgive me, and affect not such coyness. You are ever beautiful in any guise.*

FRA DIAVOLO.—ACT II.—SCENE III.

LEFTICH-DODGE.

French Opera in the Last Century.

The romantic movement was essentially German in its origin, but its influence was not bounded by the Rhine. As early as 1824 Weber's *Freischütz* was performed in Paris, followed a few years later by *Oberon* and *Euryanthe*. French musicians, always susceptible to external influences, could not but acknowledge the fascination of the romantic school, and the works of Hérold (1791-1833) show how powerfully the new leaven had acted. But Weber was not the only foreigner at this time who helped to shape the destiny of French music. The spell of Rossini was too potent for the plastic Gauls to resist, and to his influence may be traced the most salient features of the school of opéra comique which is best represented by Auber. Hérold, though divided between the camps of Germany and Italy, had individuality enough to write music which was independent of either. Yet it is significant that his last two works—the only two, in fact, which have survived—represent with singular completeness the two influences which affected French music most potently during his day. *Zampa* has been called a French *Don Giovanni,* but the music owes far more to Weber than to Mozart, while the fan-

tastic and absurd incidents of the plot have little of the supernatural terror of Mozart's opera.

It would be in vain to look in Hérold's score for an echo of the passion and variety of Mozart, but much of the music of *Zampa* is picturesque and effective. Hérold's tunes sound very conventional after Weber, but there is a good deal of skill in the way they are presented. His orchestration is of course closely modeled on that of his German prototype, and if it is impossible to say much for his originality, we can at any rate admire his taste in choosing a model.

Le Pré aux Clercs is more popular at the present moment than *Zampa,* though it is far inferior in musical interest. If *Zampa* showed the influence of Weber, *Le Pré aux Clercs* is redolent of Rossini. The overture, with its hollow ring of gaiety, strikes the note of Italianism which echoes throughout the opera. The plot is full of intrigues and conspiracies, and is decidedly confusing.

* * *

French music, as has often been pointed out, owes much to foreign influence, but very few of the strangers to whom the doors of Parisian opera-houses were opened left a deeper impression upon the music of their adopted country than Meyerbeer (1791-1864). Giacomo Meyerbeer, to give him the name by which he is now best known, underwent the same influence as Hérold. As a youth he was intimate with Weber, and his first visit to Italy introduced him to Rossini, whose brilliant style he imitated successfully in a series of Italian works which are now completely forgotten. From Italy Meyerbeer came to Paris, and there iden-

tified himself with the French school so fully that he is now regarded with complete propriety as a French composer pure and simple. Meyerbeer's music is thoroughly eclectic in type. He was a careful student of contemporary music, and the various phases through which he passed during the different stages of his career left their impress upon his style. It says much for the power of his individuality that he was able to weld such different elements into something approaching an harmonious whole. Had he done more than he did, he would have been a genius; as it is, he remains a man of exceptional talent, whose influence on the history of modern music is still important, though his own compositions are now slightly superannuated. *Robert le Diable,* the first work of his third or French period, was produced in 1831. The libretto, which, like those of all the composer's French operas, was by Eugène Scribe, is a strange tissue of absurdities, though from the merely scenic point of view it may be thought fairly effective.

Robert le Diable was an immense success when first produced. The glitter and tinsel of the story suited Meyerbeer's showy style, and besides, even when the merely trivial and conventional had been put aside, there remains a fair proportion of the score which has claims to dramatic power. The triumph of *Robert* militated against the success of *Les Huguenots* (1836) which was at first rather coldly received. Before long, however, it rivalled the earlier work in popularity, and is now generally looked upon as Meyerbeer's masterpiece. The libretto certainly compares favorably with the fatuities of *Robert le Diable.*

Les Huguenots shows Meyerbeer at his best. Even Wagner, his bitterest enemy, admitted the dramatic power of the great duet in the fourth act, and several other scenes are scarcely inferior to it in sustained inspiration. The opera is marred as a whole by Meyerbeer's invincible self-consciousness. He seldom had the courage to give his genius full play. He never lost sight of his audience, and wrote what he thought would be effective rather than what he knew was right. Thus his finest moments are marred by lapses from sincerity into the commonplace conventionality of the day. Yet the dignity and power of *Les Huguenots* are undeniable, and it is unfortunate that its excessive length should prevent it from ever being heard in its entirety.

In *Le Prophète* Meyerbeer chose a subject which, if less rich in dramatic possibility than that of *Les Huguenots,* has a far deeper psychological interest. Unfortunately, Scribe, with all his cleverness, was quite the worst man in the world to deal with the story of John of Leyden. In the libretto which he constructed for Meyerbeer's benefit, the psychological interest is conspicuous only by its absence, and the character of the young leader of the Anabaptists is degraded to the level of the merest puppet. Meyerbeer's music, fine as much of it is, suffers chiefly from the character of the libretto. The latter is merely a string of conventionally effective scenes, and the music could hardly fail to be disjointed and scrappy. Meyerbeer had little or no feeling for characterization, so that the opportunities for really dramatic effect which lay in the character of John of Leyden have been almost

entirely neglected. Once only, in the famous cantique *Roi du Ciel,* did the composer catch an echo of the prophetic rapture which animated the youthful enthusiast. Meyerbeer's besetting sin, his constant search for the merely effective, is even more pronounced in *Le Prophète* than in *Les Huguenots.* The coronation scene has nothing of the large simplicity necessary for the proper manipulation of a mass of sound. The canvas is crowded with insignificant and confusing detail, and the general effect is finical and invertebrate rather than solid and dignified.

Meyerbeer was constantly at work upon his last opera, *L' Africaine,* from 1838 until 1864, and his death found him still engaged in retouching the score. It was produced in 1865. With a musician of Meyerbeer's known eclecticism, it might be supposed that a work of which the composition extended over so long a period would exhibit the strangest conglomeration of styles and influences. Curiously enough, *L'Africaine* is the most consistent of Meyerbeer's works. This is probably due to the fact that in it the personal element is throughout outweighed by the picturesque, and the exotic fascination of the story goes far to cover its defects.

The characters of *L'Africaine,* with the possible exception of Selika and Nelusko, are the merest shadows, but the music, though less popular as a rule than that of *Les Huguenots,* or even *Le Prophète,* is undoubtedly Meyerbeer's finest effort. In his old age Meyerbeer seems to have looked back to the days of his Italian period, and thus, though occasionally conventional in form, the melodies of *L'Africaine* have a dignity and

serenity which are rarely present in the scores of his French period. There is, too, a laudable absence of that ceaseless striving after effect which mars so much of Meyerbeer's best work.

Besides the great works already discussed, Meyerbeer wrote two works for the Opéra Comique, *L'Etoile du Nord* and *Le Pardon de Ploërmel.* Meyerbeer was far too clever a man to undertake anything he could not carry through successfully, and in these operas he caught the trick of French opéra comique very happily.

The lighter parts of *L'Étoile du Nord* are delightfully arch and vivacious, and much of the concerted music is gay and brilliant. The weak point of the opera is to be found in the tendency from which Meyerbeer was never safe, to drop into mere pretentiousness when he meant to be most impressive. In some of the choruses in the camp scene there is a great pretence at elaboration, with very scanty results, and the closing scene, which is foolish and wearisome, is an unfortunate concession to the vanity of the prima donna. But on the whole *L'Étoile du Nord* is one of Meyerbeer's most attractive works, besides being an extraordinary example of his inexhaustible versatility.

Le Pardon de Ploërmel, known in Italy and England as *Dinorah,* shows Meyerbeer in a pastoral and idyllic vein. The story is extremely silly in itself, and most of the incidents take place before the curtain rises. The music is bright and tuneful, and the reaper's and hunter's songs (which are introduced for no apparent reason) are delightful; but the libretto is so impossibly foolish that the opera has fallen into dis-

repute, although the brilliant music of the heroine should make it a favorite role with competent singers.

Meyerbeer was extravagantly praised during his lifetime; he is now as bitterly decried. The truth seems to lie, as usual, between the two extremes. He was an unusually clever man, with a strong instinct for the theatre. He took immense pains with his operas, often rewriting the entire score; but his efforts were directed less towards ideal perfection than to what would be most effective, so that there is a hollowness and superficiality about his best work which we cannot ignore, even while we admit the ingenuity of the means employed. His influence upon modern opera has been extensive. He was the real founder of the school of melodramatic opera which is now so popular. Violent contrasts with him do duty for the subtle characterization of the older masters. His heroes rant and storm, and his heroines shriek and rave, but of real feeling, and even of real expression, there is little in his scores.

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The career of Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) was in striking contrast to that of Meyerbeer. While Meyerbeer was earning the plaudits of crowded theatres throughout the length and breadth of Europe, Berlioz sat alone, brooding over the vast conceptions to which it taxed even his gigantic genius to give musical shape. Even now the balance has scarcely been restored. Though Meyerbeer's popularity is on the wane, the operas of Berlioz are still known for the most part only to students. Before the Berlioz cycle at Carlsruhe in

1893, *La Prise de Troie* had never been performed on any stage, and though the French master's symphonic works now enjoy considerable popularity, his dramatic works are still looked at askance by managers. There is a reason for this other than the hardness of our hearts. Berlioz was essentially a symphonic writer.

He had little patience with the conventions of the stage, and his attempts to blend the dramatic and symphonic elements, as in *Les Troyens,* can scarcely be termed a success. Yet much may be pardoned for the sake of the noble music which lies enshrined in his works. *Benevenuto Cellini* and *Béatrice et Bénédict,* which were thought too advanced for the taste of their day, are now perhaps a trifle old-fashioned for our times. The first is a picturesque story of Rome in Carnival time. The interest centres in the casting of the sculptor's mighty Perseus, which wins him the hand of the fair Teresa. The Carnival scenes are gay and brilliant, but the form of the work belongs to a bygone age, and it is scarcely possible that a revival of it would meet with wide acceptance. *Béatrice et Bénédict* is a graceful setting of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing.* It is a work of the utmost delicacy and refinement. Though humor is not absent from the score, the prevailing impression is one of romantic charm, passing even to melancholy. Very different is the double drama *Les Troyens.* Here Belioz drew his inspiration directly from Glück, and the result is a work of large simplicity and austere grandeur, which it is not too much to hope will some day take its place in the world's repertory side by side with the masterpieces of Wagner. *La Prise de*

Troie is perhaps epic rather than dramatic, but as a whole it leaves an impression of severe and spacious grandeur, which can only be paralleled in the finest inspirations of Glück.

In the second division of the work, *Les Troyens à Carthage,* human interest is paramount. Berlioz was an enthusiastic student of Virgil, and he follows the tragic tale of the Æneid closely. The appearance of Æneas at Carthage, the love of Dido, the summons of Mercury, Æneas' departure and the passion and death of Dido, are depicted in a series of scenes of such picturesqueness and power, such languor and pathos, as surely cannot be matched outside the finest pages of Wagner. A time will certainly come when this great work, imbued throughout with a passionate yearning for the loftiest ideal of art, will receive the recognition which is its due. Of late indeed there have been signs of a revival of interest in Berlioz's mighty drama, and the recent performance of *Les Troyens* in Paris and Brussels have opened the eyes of many musicians to its manifold beauties.

Some years ago the experiment was made of adapting Berlioz's cantata, *La Damnation de Faust,* for stage purposes. The work is of course hopelessly undramatic, but the beauty of the music and the opportunities that it affords for elaborate spectacular effects have combined to win the work a certain measure of success, especially in Italy where Gounod's *Faust* has never won the popularity that it enjoys north of the Alps. *La Damnation de Faust* is hardly more than a string of incidents, with only the most shadowy semblance of connection, but several of the scenes are

effective enough on the stage, notably that in Faust's study with the march of Hungarian warriors in the distance, the exquisite dance of sylphs and the ride to the abyss. Nevertheless, when the success of curiosity is over, the work is hardly likely to retain its place in the repertory.

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Unperformed as he was, Berlioz of course could not be expected to found a school; but Meyerbeer's success soon raised him up a host of imitators. Jacques Halévy (1799-1862) drew his inspiration in part from Hérold and Weber; but *La Juive,* the work by which he is best known, owes much to Meyerbeer, whose *Robert le Diable* had taken the world of music in Paris by storm a few years before the production of Halévy's work. In turn Halévy reacted upon Meyerbeer. Many passages of *Les Huguenots* reflect the sober dignity of *La Juive;* indeed it is too often forgotten that the production of Halévy's opera preceded its more famous contemporary by a full year.

Halévy's music is characterized by dignity and sobriety, but it rarely rises to passion. He represents to a certain extent a reaction towards the pre-Rossinian school of opera, but, to be frank, most of *La Juive* is exceedingly long-winded and dull. Besides his serious operas, Halévy wrote works of a lighter cast, which enjoyed popularity in their time.

* * *

But the prince of opéra comique at this time was Auber (1782-1871). Auber began his career as a musician comparatively late in life, but *en revanche*

age seemed powerless to check his unflagging industry. His last work, *Le Rêve d'Amour,* was produced in the composer's eighty-eighth year. Auber is a superficial Rossini. He borrowed from the Italian master his wit and gaiety; he could not catch an echo of his tenderness and passion. *Fra Diavolo* shows Auber in his happiest vein. The music is gay and tuneful, without dropping into commonplace; the rhythms are brilliant, and varied, and the orchestration neat and appropriate.

La Muette de Portici, which is known in the Italian version as *Masaniello,* was written for the Grand Opéra. Here Auber vainly endeavored to suit his style to its more august surroundings. The result is entirely unsatisfactory; the more serious parts of the work are pretentious and dull, and the pretty little tunes, which the composer could not keep out of his head, sound absurdly out of place in a serious drama.

The part of Fenella gives an opportunity of distinction to a clever pantomimist, and has been associated with the names of many famous dancers; but the music of the opera throughout is one of the least favorable examples of Auber's skill.

* * *

Auber had many imitators, among whom perhaps the most successful was Adolphe Adam (1803-1856), whose *Châlet* and *Postillon de Longjumeau* are still occasionally performed. They reproduce the style of Auber with tolerable fidelity, but have no value as original work.

The only other composer of this period who deserves

to be mentioned is Félicien David (1810-1876). His *Lalla Rookh,* a setting of Moore's story, though vastly inferior to his symphonic poem *Le Désert,* is a work of distinction and charm. To David belongs the credit of opening the eyes of musicians to the possibilities of Oriental color. Operas upon Eastern subjects never became very popular in England, but in France many of them have been successful. *Le Désert* founded the school, of which *Les Pecheurs de Perles, Djamileh, Le Roi de Lahore* and *Lakmé,* are well-known representatives.

The career of the other musicians—many in number—of this facile and thoughtless epoch may be summed up in a few words. They were one and all imitators; Antoine Clapisson (1808-1866), Albert Grisar (1808-1869), and Louis Maillart (1817-1871), clung to the skirts of Auber; Louis Niedermeyer (1802-1861), threw in his lot with Halévy. So far as they succeeded in reproducing the external and superfical features of the music of their prototypes, they enjoyed a brief day of popularity. But with the first change of public taste they lapsed into oblivion, and their works nowadays sound far more old-fashioned than those of the generation which preceded them.

Modern German Opera.

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) is by far the most important figure in the history of modern opera. With regard to the intrinsic beauty of his works, and the artistic value of the theories upon which they are constructed, there have been, and still are, two opinions; but his most bigoted opponents can scarcely refuse to acknowledge the extent of the influence which he has had upon contemporary and subsequent music—an influence, in fact, which places him by the side of Monteverde and Gluck among the great revolutionists of musical history. As in their case, the importance of his work rests upon the fact that, although to a certain extent an assimilation and development of the methods of his predecessors, it embodied a deliberate revolt against existing musical conditions.

From one point of view Wagner's revolt is even more important than that of either of his forerunners, for they were men who, having failed to win success under the existing conditions of music, revolted—so to speak—in self-preservation, while he was an accomplished musician, and the author of a successful work written in strict accordance with the canons of art which then obtained. Had Wagner pleased, there was

nothing to hinder his writing a succession of *Rienzis,* and ending his days, like Spontini, rich and ennobled. To his eternal honor he rejected the prospect, and chose the strait and narrow way which led, through poverty and disgrace, to immortality.

In spite of the acknowledged success of *Rienzi,* Wagner's enemies were never tired of repeating that, like Monteverde, he had invented a new system because he could not manipulate the old. It seems hardly possible to us that musicians could ever have been found to deny that the composer of *Die Meistersinger* was a consummate master of counterpoint. Fortunately the discovery of his Symphony in C finally put an end to all doubts relative to the thoroughness of Wagner's musical education. In this work, which was written at the age of eighteen, the composer showed a mastery of the symphonic form which many of his detractors might have envied.

The fact is, that Wagner was a man of singularly flexible habit of mind. He was a careful student of both ancient and modern music, and a study of his works shows us that, so far from despising what had been done by his predecessors, he greedily assimilated all that was best in their productions, only rejecting the narrow conventions in which so many of them had contentedly acquiesced. His music is the logical development of that of Gluck and Weber, purified by a closer study of the principles of declamation, and enriched by a command of orchestral resource of which they had never dreamed.

Wagner's first opera, *Die Feen,* was written in 1833, when the composer was twenty years old. Wagner

always wrote his own libretti, even in those days. The story of *Die Feen* was taken from one of Gozzi's fairy-tales, *La Donna Serpente*. Wagner himself, in his 'Communication to my Friends,' written in 1851, has given us a *résumé* of the plot: "A fairy, who renounces immortality for the sake of a human lover, can only become a mortal through the fulfilment of certain hard conditions, the non-compliance wherewith on the part of her earthly swain threatens her with the direst penalties; her lover fails in the test, which consists in this, that, however evil and repulsive she may appear to him (in the metamorphosis which she has to undergo), he shall not reject her in his unbelief. In Gozzi's tale the fairy is changed into a snake; the remorseful lover frees her from the spell by kissing the snake, and thus wins her for his wife. I altered this dénouement by changing the fairy into a stone, and then releasing her from the spell by her lover's passionate song; while the lover, instead of being allowed to carry off his bride into his own country, is himself admitted by the fairy king to the immortal bliss of fairyland, together with his fairy wife."

When Wagner wrote *Die Feen* he was under the spell of Weber, whose influence is perceptible in every page of the score. Marschner, too, whose *Vampyr* and *Templer und Jüdin* had been recently produced at Leipzig, which was then Wagner's headquarters, also appealed very strongly to the young musician's plastic temperament. *Die Feen* consequently has little claim to originality, but the work is nevertheless interesting to those who desire to trace the master's development *ab ovo*. Both in the melodies and rhythms employed it

is possible to trace the germs of what afterwards became strongely marked characteristics. Wagner himself never saw *Die Feen* performed. In 1833 he could not persuade any German manager to produce it, and, in the changes which soon came over his musical sympathies, *Die Feen* was laid upon the shelf and probably forgotten.

It was not until 1888, five years after the composer's death, that the general enthusiasm for everything connected with Wagner induced the authorities at Munich to produce it. Since then it has been performed with comparative frequency, and formed a part of the cycles of Wagner's works which were given in 1894 and 1895.

Wagner's next work was of a very different nature. *Das Liebesverbot* was a frank imitation of the Italian school. He himself confesses that "if any one should compare this score with that of *Die Feen* he would find it difficult to understand how such a complete change in my tendencies could have been brought about in so short a time." The incident which turned his thoughts into this new channel was a performance of Bellini's *Capuletti e Montecchi,* in which Madame Schroeder-Devrient sang the part of Romeo. This remarkable woman exercised in those days an almost hypnotic influence upon Wagner, and the beauty and force of this particular impersonation impressed him so vividly that he relinquished his admiration of Weber and the Teutonic school and plunged headlong into the meretricious sensuousness of Italy. The libretto of *Das Liebesverbot* is founded upon Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure.' It was performed for the first and only

time at Magdeburg in 1836, and failed completely; but it is only just to say that its failure seems to have been due more to insufficient rehearsal than to the weakness of the score. After the success of *Die Feen* at Munich, it naturally occurred to the authorities there to revive Wagner's one other juvenile opera. The score of *Das Liebesverbot* was accordingly unearthed, and the parts were allotted. The first rehearsal, however, decided its fate. The opera was so ludicrous and unblushing an imitation of Donizetti and Bellini, that the artists could scarcely sing for laughter. Herr Vogl, the eminent tenor, and one or two others were still in favor of giving it as a curiosity, but in the end it was thought better to drop it altogether, less on account of the music than because of the licentious character of the libretto.

Rienzi, the next in order of Wagner's operas, was written on the lines of French opera. Wagner hoped to see it performed in Paris, and throughout the score he kept the methods of Meyerbeer and Spontini consistently in his mind's eye. There is very little attempt at characterization, but the opportunities for spectacular display are many and various. In later years Meyerbeer paid Wagner the compliment of saying that the libretto of *Rienzi* was the best he had ever read. *Rienzi* was produced at Dresden in 1842.

Wagner himself has described the frame of mind in which he began to work on *Rienzi:* "To do something grand, to write an opera for whose production only the most exceptional means should suffice, . . . this is what resolved me to resume, and to carry out with all my might, my former plan of *Rienzi.* In the pre-

paration of this text I took no thought for anything but the writing of an effective operatic libretto." In the light of this confession, it is best to look upon *Rienzi* merely as a brilliant exercise in the Grand Opéra manner. Much of the music is showy and effective; there is a masculine vigor about the melodies, and the concerted pieces are skilfully treated, but, except to the student of Wagner's development, its intrinsic value is very small.

Appropriately enough, the idea of writing an opera upon the legend of the Flying Dutchman first occurred to Wagner during his passage from Riga to London in the year 1839. The voyage was long and stormy, and the tempestuous weather which he encountered, together with the fantastic tales which he heard from the lips of the sailors, made so deep an impression upon his mind that he determined to make his experiences the groundwork of an opera dealing with the fortunes of the *Wandering Jew of the Ocean.* When he was in Paris, the stress of poverty compelled him to treat the sketch, which he had made for a libretto, as a marketable asset. This he sold to a now forgotten composer named Dietsch, who wrote an opera upon the subject, which failed completely. The disappearance of this work left Wagner's hands free once more, and some years later he returned *con amore* to his original idea. *Der Fliegende Holländer* was produced at Dresden in 1843.

The legend of the Flying Dutchman is, of course, an old one. The idea of the world-wearied wanderer driven from shore to shore in the vain search for peace and rest dates from Homer. Heine was the first to in-

troduce the motive of the sinner's redemption through the love of a faithful woman, which was still further elaborated by Wagner, and really forms the basis of his drama.

The music of *Der Fliegende Holländer* may be looked at from two points of view. As a link in the chain of Wagner's artistic development, it is of the highest interest. In it we see the germs of those theories which were afterwards to effect so formidable a revolution in the world of opera. In *Der Fliegende Holländer* Wagner first puts to the proof the *Leit-Motiv,* or guiding theme, the use of which forms, as it were, the base upon which the entire structure of his later works rests. In those early days he employed it with timidity, it is true, and with but a half-hearted appreciation of the poetical effect which it commands; but from that day forth each of his works shows a more complete command of its resources, and a subtler instinct as to its employment. The intrinsic musical interest of *Der Fliegende Holländer* is unequal. Wagner had made great strides since the days of *Rienzi,* but he had still a vast amount to unlearn. Side by side with passages of vital force and persuasive beauty there are dreary wastes of commonplace and the most arid conventionality. The strange mixture of styles which prevails in *Der Fliegende Holländer* makes it in some ways even less satisfastory as a work of art than *Rienzi,* which at any rate has the merit of homogeneity. Wagner is most happily inspired by the sea. The overture, as fresh and picturesque a piece of tone-painting as anything he ever wrote, is familiar to all concert-goers, and the opening of the first act is

no less original. But perhaps the most striking part of the opera, certainly the most characteristic, is the opening of the third act, with its chain of choruses between the girls and the sailors. A great deal of *Der Fliegende Holländer* might have been written by any operatic composer of the time, but this scene bears upon it the hall-mark of genius.

If *Der Fliegende Holländer* proved that the descriptive side of Wagner's genius had developed more rapidly than the psychological, the balance was promptly re-established in *Tannhäuser,* his next work. Much of the music is picturesque and effective, even in the lowest sense, but its strength lies in the extraordinary power which the composer displays of individualizing his characters—a power of which in *Der Fliengende Holländer* there was scarcely a suggestion.

So far as mere form is concerned, *Tannhäuser* (1845) is far freer from the conventionalities of the Italian school than *Der Fliegende Holländer,* but this would not have availed much if Wagner's constructive powers had not matured in so remarkable a way. It would have been useless to sweep away the old conventions if he had had nothing to set in their place. Apart from the strictly musical side of the question, Wagner had in *Tannhäuser* a story of far deeper human interest than the weird legend of the Dutchman, the tale which never grows old of the struggle of good and evil for a human soul, the tale of a remorseful sinner won from the powers of hell by the might of a pure woman's love.

It will generally be admitted that the story of *Tannhäuser* is better suited for dramatic purposes

than that of *Der Fliegende Holländer,* apart from the lofty symbolism which gives it so deeply human an interest. This would go far to account for the manifest superiority of the later work, but throughout the score it is easy to note the enhanced power and certainty of the composer in dealing even with the less interesting parts of the story. Much of *Tannhäuser* is conventional, but it nevertheless shows a great advance on *Der Fliegende Holländer,* in the disposal of the scenes as much as in the mere treatment of the voices. But in the orchestra the advance is even more manifest. The guiding theme, which in *Der Fliegende Holländer* only makes fitful and timid appearances, is used with greater boldness, and with increased knowledge of its effect. Wagner had as yet, it is true, but little conception of the importance which this flexible instrument would assume in his later works; but such passages as the orchestral introduction to the third act, and Tannhäuser's narration, give a foretaste of what the composer was afterwards to achieve by this means.

So far as orchestral color is concerned, too, the score of *Tannhäuser* is deeply interesting to the student of Wagner's development. Here we find Wagner for the first time consistently associating a certain instrument or group of instruments with one of the characters, as, for instance, the trombones with the pilgrims, and the wood-wind with Elizabeth. This plan—which is in a certain sense the outcome of the guiding theme system—he was afterwards to develop elaborately. It had of course been employed before, notably by Gluck, but Wagner with characteristic boldness carried it at once to a point of which his predecessor can scarcely have

dreamed. As an illustration, the opening of the third act may be quoted, in which Elizabeth is represented by the wood-wind—by the clarinets and bassoons in the hour of her deep affliction and abasement, and by the flutes and hautboys when her soul has finally cast off all the trammels of earth—and Wolfram by the violoncello. The feelings of the two are so exquisitely portrayed by the orchestra, that the scene would be easily comprehensible if it were carried on—as indeed much of it is—without any words at all.

Lohengrin (1850) was the first of Wagner's operas which won general acceptance, and still remains the most popular. The story lacks the deep human interest of *Tannhäuser,* but it has both power and picturequeness, while the prominence of the love-interest, which in the earlier work is thrust into the background, is sufficient to explain the preference given to it.

The interest of *Lohengrin* lies rather in the subtle treatment of the characters than in the intrinsic beauty of the story itself. Lohengrin's love for Elsa, and his apparant intention of settling in Brabant for life, seem scarcely consistent with his duties as knight of the Grail, and, save for their mutual love, neither hero nor heroine have much claim upon our sympathies. But the grouping of the characters is admirable; the truculent witch Ortrud is a fine foil to the ingenuous Elsa, and Lohengrin's spotless knighthood is cast into brilliant relief by the dastardly treachery of Telramund. The story of *Lohengrin* lacks the deep human interest of *Tannhäuser,* and the music never reaches the heights to which the earlier work sometimes soars. But in both respects *Lohengrin* has the merit of homo-

geneity; the libretto is laid out by a master hand, and the music, though occasionally monotonous in rhythm, has none of those strange relapses into conventionality which mar the beauty of *Tannhäuser.*

Musically *Lohengrin* marks the culminating point of Wagner's earlier manner. All the links with the Italian school are broken save one, the concerted finale. Here alone he adheres to the old tradition of cavatina and cabaletta—the slow movement followed by the quick. The aria in set form has completely disappeared, while the orchestra, though still often used merely as an accompaniment, is never degraded, as occasionally happens in *Tannhäuser,* to the rank of a big guitar.

The opening notes of *Lohengrin* indeed prove incontestably the increased power and facility with which Wagner had learned to wield his orchestra since the days of *Tannhäuser.* The prelude to *Lohengrin*—a mighty web of sound woven of one single theme—is, besides being a miracle of contrapuntal ingenuity, one of the most poetical of Wagner's many exquisite conceptions. In it he depicts the bringing to earth by the hands of angels of the Holy Grail, the vessel in which Joseph of Arimathea caught the last drops of Christ's blood upon the cross. With the opening chords we seem to see the clear blue expanse of heaven spread before us in spotless radiance. As the Grail motive sounds for the first time *pianissimo* in the topmost register of the violins, a tiny white cloud, scarcely perceptible at first, but increasing every moment, forms in the zenith. Ever descending as the music gradually increases in volume, the cloud resolves itself into a choir of angels clad in white, the bearers of the sacred

cup. Nearer and still nearer they come, until as the Grail motive reaches a passionate *fortissimo,* they touch the earth, and deliver the Holy Grail to the band of faithful men who are consecrated to be its earthly champions. Their mission accomplished, the angels swiftly return. As they soar up, the music grows fainter. Soon they appear once more only as a snowy cloud on the bosom of the blue. The Grail motive fades away into faint chords, and the heaven is left once more in cloudless radiance.

A noticeable point in the score of *Lohengrin* is the further development of the beautiful idea which appears in *Tannhäuser,* of associating a certain instrument or group of instruments with one particular character. The idea itself, it may be noticed in passing, dates from the time of Bach, who used the strings of the orchestra to accompany the words of Christ in the Matthew Passion, much as the old Italian painters surrounded his head with a halo. In *Lohengrin* Wagner used this beautiful ideal more systematically than in *Tannhäuser;* Lohengrin's utterances are almost always accompanied by the strings of the orchestra, while the wood-wind is specially devoted to Elsa. This plan emphasizes very happily the contrast, which is the root of the whole drama, between spiritual and earthly love, typified in the persons of Lohengrin and Elsa, which the poem symbolizes in allegorical fashion.

The attempt to divide the life and work of a composer into fixed periods is generally an elusive and unsatisfactory experiment, but to this rule the case of Wagner is an exception. His musical career falls naturally into two distinct divisions, and the works of

these two periods differ so materially in scope and execution that the veriest tyro in musical matters cannot fail to grasp their divergencies. In the years which elapsed between the composition of *Lohengrin* and *Das Rheingold,* Wagner's theories upon the proper treatment of lyrical drama developed in a surprising manner. Throughout his earlier works the guiding theme is used with increasing frequency, it is true, so that in *Lohengrin* its employment adds materially to the poetical interest of the score; but in *Das Rheingold* we are in a different world. Here the guiding theme is the pivot upon which the entire work turns. The occasional use of some characteristic musical phrase to illustrate the recurrence of a special personality or phase of thought has given way to a deliberate system in which not only each of the characters in the drama, but also their thoughts, feelings, and aspirations are represented by a distinct musical equivalent. These guiding themes are by no means the mere labels that hostile critics of Wagner would have us believe. They are subject, as much as the characters and sentiments which they represent, to organic change and development. By this means every incident in the progress of the drama, the growth of each sentiment or passion, the play of thought and feeling, all find a close equivalent in the texture of the music, and the connection between music and drama is advanced to an intimacy which certainly could not be realized by any other means.

The difference in style between *Lohengrin* and *Das Rheingold* is so very marked that it is only natural to look for some explanation of the sudden change other

than the natural development of the composer's genius. Wagner's social position at this point in his career may have reacted to a certain extent upon his music. An exile from his country, his works tabooed in every theatre, he might well be pardoned if he felt that all chance of a career as a popular composer was over for him, and decided for the future to write for himself alone. This may explain the complete renunciation of the past which appears in *Das Rheingold,* the total severance from the Italian tradition which lingers in the pages of *Lohengrin,* and the brilliant unfolding of a new scheme of lyric drama planned upon a scale of unexampled magnificence and elaboration.

Intimately as Wagner's theory of the proper scope of music drama is connected with the system of guiding themes which he elaborated, it need hardly be said that he was very far from being the first to recognize the importance of their use in music. There are several instances of guiding themes in Bach. Beethoven, too, and even Grétry, used them occasionally with admirable effect. But before Wagner's day they had been employed with caution, not to say timidity. He was the first to realize their full poetic possibility.

Das Rheingold, the first work in which Wagner put his matured musical equipment to the proof, is the first division of a gigantic tetralogy, *Der Ring des Nibelungen.* The composition of this mighty work extended over a long period of years. It was often interrupted, and as often recommenced. In its completed form it was performed for the first time at the opening of the Festspielhaus at Bayreuth in 1876, but the first two divisions of the work, *Das Rheingold* and *Die*

Walküre, had already been given at Munich, in 1869 and 1870 respectively. It will be most convenient in this place to treat *Der Ring des Nibelungen* as a complete work, although *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger* were written and performed before *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung.*

Wagner took the main incidents of his drama from the old Norse sagas, principally from the two Eddas, but in many minor points his tale varies from that of the original authorities. Nevertheless he grasped the spirit of the myth so fully, that his version of the Nibelung story yields in harmony and beauty to that of none of his predecessors. There is one point about the Norse mythology which is of the utmost importance to the proper comprehension of *Der Ring des Nibelungen.* The gods of Teutonic legend are not immortal. In the Edda the death of the gods is often mentioned, and distinct reference is made to their inevitable downfall. Behind Valhalla towers the gigantic figure of Fate, whose reign is eternal. The gods rule for a limited time, subject to its decrees. This ever-present idea of inexorable doom is the guiding idea of Wagner's great tragedy. Against the inevitable the gods plot and scheme in vain.

Das Rheingold is conspicuous among the later works of Wagner for its brevity and concentration. Although it embraces four scenes, the music is continuous throughout, and the whole makes but one act. Wagner's aim seems to have been to set forth in a series of brilliant pictures the medium in which his mighty drama was to unfold itself. Human interest of course there is none, but the supernatural machinery is com-

plete. The denizens of the world are grouped in four divisions—the gods in heaven, the giants on the earth, the dwarfs beneath, and the water-sprites in the bosom of the Rhine. *Das Rheingold* has a freshness and an open-air feeling which are eminently suitable to the prologue of a work which deals so much with the vast forces of nature as Wagner's colossal drama. There is little scope in it for the delicate psychology which enriches the later divisions of the tetralogy, but, on the other hand, Wagner has reproduced the "large utterance of the early gods" with exquisite art. Musically it can hardly rank with its successors, partly no doubt because the plot has not their absorbing interest, partly also because *Das Rheingold* is the first work in which Wagner consciously worked in accordance with his theory of guiding themes, and consequently he had not as yet gained that complete mastery of his elaborate material which he afterwards attained. Yet some of the musical pictures in *Das Reingold* would be difficult to match throughout the glowing gallery of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* such as the beautiful opening scene in the depths of the Rhine, and the magnificent march to Valhalla with which it closes.

With *Die Walküre* the human interest of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* begins, and with it Wagner rises to greater heights than he could hope to reach in *Das Rheingold.* In picturesque force and variety *Die Walküre* does not yield to its predecessors, while the passion and beauty of the immortal tale of the Volsungs lift it dramatically into a different world. *Die Walküre* is the most generally popular of the four works which make up Wagner's great tetralogy, for the

inordinate length of some of the scenes in the second act is amply atoned for by the immortal beauties of the first and third. Twenty years ago Wagner's enemies used to make capital out of the incestuous union of Siegmund and Sieglinde, but it is difficult to believe in the sincerity of their virtuous indignation. No sane person would conceivably attempt to judge the personages of the Edda by a modern code of ethics; nor could any one with even a smattering of the details of Greek mythology affect to regard such a union as extraordinary, given the environment in which the characters of Wagner's drama move. It may be noted in passing that *Die Walküre* is the latest of Wagner's works in which the traces of his earlier manner are still perceptible. For the most part, as in all his later works, the score is one vast many-colored web of guiding themes, "a mighty maze, but not without a plan!" Here and there, however, occur passages, such as the Spring Song in the first act and the solemn melody which pervades Brünnhilde's interview with Siegmund in the second, which, beautiful in themselves as they are, seem reminiscent of earlier and simpler days, and scarcely harmonize with the color scheme of the rest of the work.

Siegfried, as has been happily observed, is the scherzo of the great Nibelung symphony. After the sin and sorrow of *Die Walküre,* the change to the free life of the forest and the boyish innocence of the youthful hero is doubly refreshing. *Siegfried* is steeped in the spirit of youth. There breathes through it the freshness of the early world. Wagner loved it best of his works. He called it "the most beautiful of my life's dreams." Though less stirring in incident than

Die Walküre, it is certainly more sustained in power. It is singularly free from those lapses into musical aridity which occasionally mar the beauty of the earlier work. If the poem from time to time sinks to an inferior level, the music is instinct with so much resource and beauty that there can be no question of dulness.

In *Siegfried,* in fact, Wagner's genius reaches its zenith. In power, picturesqueness, and command of orchestral color and resource, he never surpassed such scenes as the opening of the third act, or Siegfried's scaling of Brünnhilde's rock. It is worth while remarking that an interval of twelve years elapsed between the composition of the second and third acts of *Siegfried.* In 1857, although *Der Ring des Nibelungen* was well advanced towards completion, Wagner's courage gave way. The possibility of seeing his great work performed seemed so terribly remote, that he decided for the time being to abandon it and begin on a work of more practicable dimensions. In 1869, King Ludwig of Bavaria induced him to return to the attack, and with what delight he did so may easily be imagined. At first sight it seems strange that there should be such complete harmony between the parts of the work, which were written at such different times. The explanation of course lies in the firm fabric of guiding themes, which is the sure foundation upon which the score of *Siegfried* is built. Had Wagner trusted merely to the casual inspiration of the moment, it is possible that the new work would have harmonized but ill with the old; as it was, he had but to gather up the broken threads of his unfinished work to find himself once more under the same inspiration as before.

His theory still held good; his materials were the same; he had but to work under the same conditions to produce work of the same quality as before.

Die Götterdämmerung is prevented by its portentous length from ever becoming popular to the same extent as Wagner's other works, but it contains some of the noblest music he ever wrote. The final scene, for sublimity of conception and grandeur of execution, remains unequaled in the whole series of his writings. It fitly gathers together the many threads of that vast fabric, *Der Ring des Nibelungen.* Saint Saëns says of it that "from the elevation of the last act of *Götterdämmerung,* the whole work appears in its almost supernatural grandeur, like the chain of the Alps seen from the summit of Mont Blanc."

The literature of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is already very large, and not a year passes without some addition to the long catalogue of works dealing with Wagner's mighty drama. Readers desirous of studying the tetralogy more closely, whether from its literary, ethical, or musical side, must refer to one or more of the many handbooks devoted to its elucidation for criticism on a more elaborate scale than is possible within the narrow limits of such a work as the present.

It has already been related how Wagner broke off, when midway through *Der Ring des Nibelungen,* and devoted himself to the composition of a work of more conventional dimensions. The latter was *Tristan und Isolde.* Produced as it was in 1865, four years before *Das Rheingold,* it was the first of Wagner's later works actually to see the light. Round its devoted head, therefore, the war of controversy raged more

fiercely than in the case of any of Wagner's subsequent works. Those days are long past, and *Tristan* is now universally accepted as a work of supreme musical loveliness, although the lack of exciting incident in the story must always prevent the *profanum vulgus* from sharing the musician's rapture over the deathless beauties of the score.

Tristan und Isolde is the *Romeo and Juliet* of music. Never has the poetry and tragedy of love been set to music of such resistless beauty. But love, though the guiding theme of the work, is not the only passion that reigns in its pages. The haughty splendor of Isolde's injured pride in the first act, the beautiful devotion of the faithful Kurwenal, and the blank despair of the dying Tristan in the third, are depicted with a magical touch.

Some years ago it was the fashion, among the more uncompromising adherents of Wagner, to speak of *Tristan und Isolde* as the completest exposition of their master's theories, because the chorus took practically no share in the development of the drama. Many musicians, on the other hand, have felt Wagner's wilful avoidance of the possibilities of choral effect to detract seriously from the musical interest of the opera, and for that reason have found *Tristan und Isolde* less satisfying as a work of art than *Parsifal* or *Die Meistersinger,* in which the chorus takes its proper place. It is scarcely necessary to point out that, opera being in the first instance founded upon pure convention, there is nothing more illogical in the judicious employment of the chorus than in the substitution of song for speech, which is the essence of the art-form.

Wagner's one comic opera was born under a lucky star. Most of his operas had to wait many years for production, but the kindly care of Ludwig of Bavaria secured the performance of *Die Meistersinger* a few months after the last note had been written. Unlike many of his other masterpieces, too, *Die Meistersinger* (1868) was a success from the first. There were critics, it is true, who thought the opera "a monstrous caterwauling," but it had not to wait long for general appreciation, and performances in Berlin, Vienna, and Dresden soon followed the initial one at Munich.

Although it contains comic and even farcical scenes, *Die Meistersinger* is in fact not so much a comedy as a satire, with a vein of wise and tender sentiment running through it. It has also to a certain extent the interest of autobiography. It is not difficult to read in the story of Walther's struggles against the prejudice and pedantry of the Mastersingers a suggestion of Wagner's own life-history, and if Beckmesser represents the narrow malice of critics who are themselves composers —and these were always Wagner's bitterest enemies— Sachs may stand for the enlightened public, which was the first to appreciate the nobility of the composer's aim. It is not surprising that *Die Meistersinger* was one of the first of Wagner's mature works to win general appreciation. The exquisite songs, some of them easily detachable from their context, scattered lavishly throughout the work, together with the important share of the music allotted to the chorus, constitute a striking contrast to *Tristan und Isolde* or *Der Ring des Nibelungen.* It has been suggested that this was due to a half-conscious desire on Wagner's part to write music

which should appeal more to the popular ear than was possible in *Tristan und Isolde.* One of the most striking features of the opera is the mastery with which Wagner has caught and reproduced the atmosphere of sixteenth-century Nuremberg without sacrificing a jot of the absolute modernity of his style. *Die Meistersinger* yields to none of the composer's work in the complexity and elaboration of the score—indeed, the prelude may be quoted as a specimen of Wagner's command of all secrets of polyphony at its strongest and greatest.

Parsifal, Wagner's last and in the opinion of many his greatest work, was produced in 1882 at the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth. The name by which the composer designated his work, *Bühnenweihfestspiel,* which may be translated "Sacred Festival Drama," sufficiently indicates its solemn import, and indeed both in subject and treatment it stands remote from ordinary theatrical standards. The subject of *Parsifal* is drawn from the legends of the Holy Grail, which had already furnished Wagner with the tale of *Lohengrin.*

It would be in vain to attempt to treat, within the restricted limits of these pages, of the manifold beauties of *Parsifal,* musical, poetical, and scenical. Many books have already been devoted to it alone, and to these the reader must be referred for a subtler analysis of this extraordinary work. It is difficult to compare *Parsifal* with any of Wagner's previous works. By reason of its subject it stands apart, and performed as it is at Bayreuth, and there, save for sacrilegious New York, alone, with the utmost splendor of mounting, interpreted by artists devoted heart and soul to its

cause, and listened to by an audience of the elect assembled from the four corners of the earth, *Parsifal,* so to speak, is as yet surrounded by a halo of almost unearthly splendor. It is difficult to apply to it the ordinary canons of criticism. One thing, however, may safely be said, that it stands alone among works written for theatrical performance by reason of its absolute modernity coupled with a mystic fervor such as music has not known since the days of Palestrina.

Of Wagner's work as a whole it is as yet too early to speak with certainty. The beauty of his works, and the value of the system upon which they are founded, must still be to a certain extent a matter of individual taste. One thing, at any rate, may safely be said: he has altered the whole course of modern opera. It is inconceivable that a work should now be written without traces more or less important of the musical system founded and developed by Richard Wagner.

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The history of music furnishes more than one instance of the paralyzing effect which the influence of a great genius is apt to exercise upon his contemporaries and immediate successors. The vast popularity of Handel in England had the effect of stunting the development of her national music for more than a century. During his lifetime, and for many years after his death, English-born musicians could do little but imitate his more salient mannerisms, and reproduce in an attenuated form the lessons which he had taught. The effect of Wagner's music upon German opera has been something of the same description. As soon as his works gained their legitimate place in the affections

of his countrymen, his influence began to assume formidable proportions. The might of his individuality was irresistible. It was not possible, as in Italy and France, to combine the system of Wagner with other elements. In Germany it had to be Wagner or nothing, and thus, except for the writers of sentimental Singspiele, a form of opera which scarcely comes into the province of art at all, German musicians have vied with each other in producing imitations of their great master, which succeeded or failed according to the measure of their resemblance to their model, but had very little value as original work. The production of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* gave rise to a hope that the merely imitative period was passing away, but it is plain that the mighty shadow of Wagner still hangs over German music. Strauss's *Salome* may be the herald of a new epoch, but on that subject it is too soon to indulge in prophecy.

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Wagner had completed what, for the sake of convenience, we have called his earlier period, before his influence began to make itself felt in German opera. *Lohengrin* was performed for the first time under Liszt's direction at Weimar in 1850. Eight years later Cornelius's *Barbier von Bagdad* was performed at the same theatre under the same conductor. This was Liszt's last production at Weimar, for the ill-feeling stirred up by Cornelius's work was so pronounced that the great pianist threw up his position as Kapellmeister in disgust, and took refuge in the more congenial society of Rome. Peter Cornelius (1824-1874) was one of the most prominent of the band of young men who

gathered round Liszt at Weimar, and by means of their music and writings sought to further the cause of "New German" art. *Der Barbier von Bagdad* was immensely in advance of its time. It failed completely to attract the public of Weimar, the most cultivated in Europe, when it was originally produced, but it is now one of the most popular operas in Germany. The beauties of the score are doubly astonishing when it is remembered that when it was written *Die Meistersinger* had not been composed. The germs of much that delights us in Wagner's comic opera may be found in *Der Barbier,* and it is certain that if Cornelius received his initial impulse from *Lohengrin,* he himself reacted upon Wagner to a very remarkable extent. The plot of *Der Barbier* is long-winded and puerile, and the interest is entirely centered in the music, which is of extraordinary power and beauty. Much of it is of course light and trivial, but such scenes as that of the Muezzin call, or the wild confusion of the last finale, are fully worthy of the master upon whom Cornelius modelled his style. Cornelius had a pretty gift for humorous orchestration, and his accompaniments often anticipate the dainty effects of *Die Meistersinger.*

Das Rheingold being still unwritten in 1858, it would be too much to expect a systematized use of guiding themes, but they are often employed with consummate skill, and in the Muezzin scene the music of the call to prayer forms the basis of a symphonic passage, which is thoroughly in the style of Wagner's later works. Cornelius left two posthumous works, *Der Cid* and *Gunlod,* which have been produced during the last

few years. They are little more than imitations of Wagner's maturer style.

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Hermann Goetz (1840-1876) was a composer whose early death cut short a career of remarkable promise. He produced but one opera during his lifetime, but that displayed an originality and a resource for which it would be vain to look in the multifarious compositions of the Kapellmeisters of the period. *Der Widerspänstigen Zähmung* follows the incidents of *The Taming of the Shrew* very closely.

Goetz's music brims over with frolicsome humor and gaiety, and the more serious portions are tender without being sentimental. The influence of Wagner is more plainly seen in the musicianly development of the melodies than in their employment as guiding themes, though of this, too, there are not few instances. But the parts of the work in which Goetz's indebtedness to Wagner are most apparent are the choruses, which, both in their tunefulness and in the elaborate nature of the part-writing, often recall *Die Meistersinger,* and in the orchestration, which is exceedingly fanciful and imaginative. *Der Widerspänstigen Zahmung* has never been properly appreciated in England and America, in spite of the familiar nature of the libretto. Goetz left another opera, *Francesca da Rimini,* unfinished. This was completed by his friend Ernst Frank, but has never met with much success.

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Cornelius and Goetz would have been the first to admit the influence which Wagner's works exercised

upon their imigination, yet their admiration for his music never seduced them into anything like mere imitation. The operas of Carl Goldmark are founded far more directly upon the methods and system of Wagner. Yet it would be unjust to dismiss him as a mere plagiarist. In his first work, *Die Königin von Saba* (1875), there is a great deal which is entirely independent of Wagner's or any one else's influence. It is a strong and effective opera. The local color is managed very skillfully, and the orchestration is novel and brilliant. Yet there is very little of that indefinable quality, which we call sincerity, about the score. It was happily described at its production as a clever imitation of good music. The influence of Wagner is strongest in the love of music, which owes much to *Tristan und Isolde*. *Merlin* (1886), Goldmark's second opera, has not been as successful in Germany as *Die Königin von Saba*. The libretto, which is founded upon the Arthurian legend of Merlin and Vivien, shows many points of resemblance to Wagner's later works, and the music follows his system of guiding themes far more closely than in the earlier work. *Merlin* may stand as an instance of the unfortunate influence which a man of Wagner's power and originality exercises upon his contemporaries. There is little in it which cannot be traced more or less directly to a prototype in the works of Wagner, and it need scarcely be said that Goldmark does not improve upon his model. In *Das Heimchen am Herd* (1896), the libretto of which is founded upon Dickens's famous story, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, Goldmark seems to have tried to emulate the success of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*. There

are suggestions in it, too, of the influence of Smetana, who dawned upon the Viennese horizon in 1890. In this work, which has been performed with great success in Germany, and was produced in English by the Carl Rosa Company in 1900, the composer contrived very cleverly to put off the grandiose manner of his earlier operas. Elaborate as the orchestral part of the score is, it is never allowed to overpower the voices, and the general impression of the opera is one of rare simplicity and charm. Goldmark's later works, *Die Kriegsgefangene* (1899) and *Götz von Berlichingen* (1902), have been less successful.

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Cyrill Kistler (1848-1907), was spoken of some years ago as the man upon whom Wagner's mantle had fallen, but his recent death has shattered the hopes founded upon the promise of his early works. *Kunihild,* a work dealing with a heroic legend, was produced in 1883. It is a clever imitation of the Wagnerian manner, except as regards the choruses, which scarcely rise above the standard of the Liedertafel; but neither at its production nor at an elaborate revival, which took place at Würzburg a few years ago, did it meet with more than a *succès d'estime.* There seems to be better work in *Eulenspiegel,* a comic opera founded upon Kotzebue's comedy. The music is instinct with genuine humor, and though but remotely suggesting the methods of Wagner shows complete mastery of technical resource.

The most important contribution to German opera made during the decade that followed the death of Wagner was Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel,* which was

produced in December, 1893. Before that time the composer was known to fame only by a couple of cantatas and some arrangements of scenes from Wagner's works for concert purposes, but at one bound he became the most popular living operatic composer of Germany. The libretto of *Hänsel und Gretel* is a very charming arrangement, in three scenes, of a familiar nursery tale.

Humperdinck's music reproduces, with infinite art, the tender and childlike charm of the delightful old fairy tale. His score is amazingly elaborate, and his treatment of the guiding themes which compose it is kaleidoscopic in its variety, yet the whole thing flows on as naturally as a ballad. The voice-parts are always suave and melodious, and the orchestral score, however complicated, never loses touch of consummate musical beauty. Humperdinck's melody is founded upon the Volkslied, and he uses at least one nursery tune with charming effect. The framework of *Hänsel und Gretel* is that bequeathed by Wagner, but the spirit which animates and informs the work is so different from that of the Bayreuth master, that there can be no suspicion of imitation, much less of plagiarism. Humperdinck is the first German operatic composer of distinct individuality since the death of Wagner. He has shown that the methods of the great composer can be used as a garment to cover an individuality as distinct as that of any writer in the history of opera.

Humperdinck's share of *Die sieben Geislein,* a children's ballad opera which was published some years ago, consists only of a few songs of an unimportant character, which will not enhance his reputation. *Königskinder,* which was produced in 1897, must be

classed as a play with incidental music rather than as an opera. The composer directed that the accompanied dialogue, of which there is a good deal, should be rhythmically chanted, but when the work came to be performed these directions were practically ignored by the players. *Königskinder* was followed in 1902 by *Dornröschen,* another fairy play accompanied by incidental music, which won little success, nor has good fortune attended his latest opera, *Die Heirath wider Willen* (1905).

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Among the younger generation of German composers, mention must be made of Max Schillings, whose very promising *Ingwelde* (1894) has recently been succeeded by a remarkable work, entitled *Moloch* (1907); and of Wilhelm Kienzl, the composer of *Der Evangelimann* (1895). In *Ingwelde* Schillings followed the Wagnerian tradition almost too faithffully, but *Moloch* is a of very distinct individuality. *Der Evangelimann,* on the other hand, is thoroughly eclectic in style, and the influence not only of Wagner, but of Meyerbeer, Gounod and even Mascagni, may be traced in its pages. Kienzl's later works have met with little favor. *Donna Diana* (1895), by a composer named Reznicek, is a comic opera founded upon a Spanish subject, which has had a most sucessful career in Germany during the past few years. It is elaborate in construction, and indeed the score seems to be too complicated to harmonize well with the comic incidents of the story. More recently the composer has won success with a work on the subject of Till Eulenspiegel.

Heinrich Zöllner came to the front in 1899, with

Die versunkene Glocke, an opera founded upon Gerhart Hauptmann's famous play, which is said to reproduce the symbolic charm of the original with conspicuous success. Eugene d'Albert, though English by birth, has for so long identified himself with Germany, that the success of his comic opera, *Die Abreise* (1898), may most suitably be recorded here. His more ambitious works have been less favorably received. Siegfried Wagner, in spite of his parentage, seems to have founded his style principally upon that of Humperdinck. His first opera, *Der Bärenhäuter* (1899), was fairly successful, principally owing to a fantastic and semi-comic libretto. *Herzog Wildfang* (1901) and *Der Kobold* (1904) failed completely, nor does his latest work, *Bruder Lustig* (1905), raise very sanguine hopes as to its young composer's future career. Another follower of Humperdinck is Eduard Poldini, whose clever and charming *Der Vagabund und die Prinzessin,* a graceful version of one of Hans Andersen's stories, was given in London with success in 1906.

Mention must also be made of Felix Weingartner, whose *Genesius* (1892) and *Orestes* (1902) are said to contain much fine music; of August Bungert, whose trilogy, founded upon the Odyssey, has been received with favor in Dresden, though it does not appear to have made much way elsewhere; and of Hans Pfitzner, whose *Rose von Liebesgarten* (1901) is one of the most promising operas of the younger generation.

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The most important figure in the world of German opera to-day is unquestionably that of Richard Strauss.

His achievements as a symphonic writer are very well known to the world at large. His first opera, *Guntram* (1894), was hardly more than an exercise in the manner of Wagner, and made comparatively little impression. *Feuersnoth* (1901) was a far more characteristic production. It deals with an old legend of the love of a sorcerer for a maiden. The sorcerer is rejected, and in revenge he deprives the town in which the maiden lives of fire and light. The townspeople press the maiden to relent, and her yielding is signalized by a sudden blaze of splendor. Strauss's score shows to the full the amazing command of polyphony and the bewildering richness and variety of orchestration which have made his name famous. The plot of *Feuersnoth*, however, was against it, and it does not seem to have won a permanent success.

Salome (1906), on the other hand, has triumphed in Italy and Paris as well as in Germany, and succeeded in scandalizing New York so seriously that it was withdrawn after a single performance. *Salome* is a setting, almost unabbreviated, of Oscar Wilde's play of that name, which itself owed much to a tale by Flaubert. Strauss is the stormy petrel of modern music, and *Salome* has aroused more discussion than anything he has written. Many critics quite the reverse of prudish have found its ethics somewhat difficult of digestion, while conservative musicians hold up their hands in horror at its harmonic audacity. The more advanced spirits find a strange exotic beauty in the weird harmonies and infinitely suggestive orchestration, and contend with some justice that a work of art must be judged as such, not as an essay in didactic

morality. The *Salome* question may well be left for time to settle.

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In modern times Singspiel has for the most part become merged in comic opera, which, though originally an importation from France, has become thoroughly acclimatized in Germany, and in the hands of such men as Johann Strauss, Franz von Suppé, and Carl Millöcker, has produced work of no little artistic interest. To the Singspiel may be traced an exceedingly unpretentious school of opera, dealing for the most part with homely and sentimental subjects, of which the best-known representative is Victor Nessler (1841-1890). Nessler's opera, *Der Trompeter von Säkkingen,* is still one of the most popular works in the repertory of German opera houses, and his *Rattenfänger von Hameln* is scarcely less of a favorite. The first of these works is founded upon Scheffel's well-known poem, and tells in artless fashion of the love of Jung Werner, the trumpeter, for the daughter of the Baron von Schönau; the second deals with the story of the Hamelin rat-catcher, which Browning has immortalized. Nessler has little more than a vein of simple melody to recommend him, and his works have had no success beyond the frontiers of Germany; but at home his flow of rather feeble sentimentality has endeared him to every susceptible heart in the Fatherland.

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Closely allied to the German school of opera is that of Bohemia, of which the most famous representative is Smetana (1824-1884). Outside the frontiers of his

native land, Smetana was practically unknown until the Vienna Exhibition of 1890, when his opera, *Die verkaufte Braut,* was produced for the first time in the Austrian capital. Since then it has been played in many German opera houses, and was performed in London in 1895 and 1907, and was produced in New York during the season of 1908-1909.

If Smetana owes anything to anybody it is to Mozart, whose form and system of orchestration his own occasionally recalls, but his music is so thoroughly saturated with the melodies and rhythms of Bohemia, that it is quite unnecessary to look for any source of inspiration other than the composer's own native land. But although Smetana's music is Bohemian to the core, he brings about his effects like a true artist. The national color is not laid on in smudges, but tinges the whole fabric of the score. Smetana's other works are less known outside Bohemia. *Das Geheimniss* and *Der Kuss* are comic operas of a thoroughly national type, while *Dalibor* and *Libusa* deal with stirring episodes of Bohemian history.

More famous than his master is Smetana's pupil Dvorak (1841-1904), yet the latter seems to have had little real vocation for the stage. His operas, *Der Bauer ein Schelm* and *Der Dickschädel,* appear to follow the style of Smetana very closely. They have been favorably received in Bohemia, but the thoroughly national sentiment of the libretti must naturally militate against their success elsewhere.

Modern Italian Opera

The death of Verdi occurred so recently that it is still possible to speak of him as representing the music of modern Italy in its noblest and most characteristic manifestation, but his musical record stretches back to a bygone period. His first work, *Oberto, Conte di San Bonifacio,* was performed in 1839, when *Les Huguenots* was but three years old, and *Der Fliegende Holländer* still unwritten. It is thoroughly and completely Italian in type, and, though belonging to a past age in the matter of form, contains the germs of those qualities which were afterward to make Verdi so popular, the rough, almost brutal energy which contrasted so strongly with the vapid sweetness of Donizetti, and the vigorous vein of melody which throughout his career never failed him. Verdi's next work, a comic opera known alternatively as *Un Giorno di Regno* and *Il Finto Stanislao* (1840), was a failure. *Nabucodonosor* (1842) and *I Lombardi* (1843) established his reputation in his own country and won favor abroad; but the opera which gave him European fame was *Ernani* (1844). Hugo's melodrama suited Verdi's blood-and-thunder style exactly. *Ernani* is crude and sensational, but its rough vigor never descends to weakness, though it often comes dangerously near to vulgarity. *Ernani*

is the opera most typical of Verdi's earliest period. With all its blemishes, it is easy to see how its masculine vigor and energy must have captivated the audiences of the day. But there were political as well as musical reasons for the instantaneous success of Verdi's early operas. Italy, in the forties, was a seething mass of sedition. Verdi's strenuous melodies, often allied to words in which the passionate patriotism of his countrymen contrived to read a political sentiment, struck like a trumpet-call upon the ears of men already ripe for revolt against the hated Austrian rule. Such strains as the famous *O mia patria, si bella e perduta* in *Nabucodonosor,* proclaimed Verdi the Tyrtæus of awakened Italy.

Ernani was followed by a series of works which, for the sake of Verdi's reputation, it is better to pass over as briefly as possible. His success provided him with more engagements than he could conscientiously fulfil, and the quality of his work suffered in consequence. There are some fine scenes in *I Due Foscari* (1844), but it has little of the vigor of *Ernani. Giovanna d'Arco* (1845), *Alzira* (1845), and *Attila* (1846), were almost total failures. In *Macbeth* (1847), however, Verdi seems to have been inspired by his subject, and wrote better music than he had yet given to the world. The libretto is a miserable perversion of Shakespeare, and for that reason the opera has never succeeded in England and America, but in countries which can calmly contemplate a ballet of witches, or listen unmoved to Lady Macbeth trolling a drinking-song, it has had its day of success. *Macbeth* is interesting to students of Verdi's development as the first

work in which he shows signs of emerging from his *Sturm und Drang* period. There is some admirable declamatory music in it, which seems to foreshadow the style of *Rigoletto,* and the sleep-walking scene, though old-fashioned in structure, is really impressive.

After *Macbeth* came another series of works which are now forgotten. Among them was *I Masnadieri,* which was written for a London theatre in 1847. Although the principal part was sung by Jenny Lind, the work was a complete failure. Passing quickly by *Il Corsaro* (1848), *La Battaglia di Legnano* (1849), *Luisa Miller* (1849), and *Stiffelio* (1850), all of which have dropped completely out of the current repertory, we come to the brilliant period in which Verdi produced in succession three works which, through all changes of taste and fashion, have manfully held their place in popular favor—*Rigoletto, Il Trovatore,* and *La Traviata. Rigoletto* (1851) is founded upon Victor Hugo's drama, *Le Roi s'amuse.* The *locale* of the story is changed, and the King of France becomes a Duke of Mantua, but otherwise the original scheme of the work remains unaltered.

The music of *Rigoletto* is on a very different plane from that of *Ernani.* Verdi had become uneasy in the fetters of the cavatina-cabaletta tradition—the slow movement followed by the quick—which, since the day of Rossini, had ruled Italian opera with a rod of iron. In *Rigoletto,* although the old convention still survives, the composer shows a keen aspiration after a less trammelled method of expressing himself. Rigolleto's great monologue is a piece of declamation pure and simple, and as such struck a note till

then unheard in Italy. The whole of the last act is a brilliant example of Verdi's picturesque power, combined with acute power of characterization. The Duke's gay and lightsome *canzone,* the magnificent quartet, in which the different passions of four personages are contrasted and combined with such consummate art, and the sombre terrors of the tempest, touch a level of art which Verdi had not till then attained, nor was to reach again until the days of *Aida,* twenty years later.

Il Trovatore (1853) is melodrama run mad. The plot is terribly confused, and much of it borders on the incomprehensible. The music of *Il Trovatore* shows a sad falling off from the promise of *Rigoletto.* Face to face with such a libretto, Verdi probably felt that refinement and characterization were equally out of the question, and fell back on the coarseness of his earlier style. *Il Trovatore* abounds with magnificent tunes, but they are slung together with very little feeling for appropriateness. There is a brutal energy about the work which has been its salvation, for of the higher qualities, which make a fitful appearance in *Rigoletto,* there is hardly a trace.

La Traviata (1853) is an operatic version of Dumas's famous play, *La Dame aux Camélias.* The sickly tale of the love and death of Marguerite Gauthier, here known as Violetta, is hardly an ideal subject for a libretto, and it says much for Verdi's versatility that, after his excursions into transpontine melodrama, he was able to treat *drawing-room tragedy* with success. The music of *La Traviata* is in strong contrast to Verdi's previous work. The interest of Dumas's play

is mainly psychological, and demands a delicacy of treatment which would have been thrown away upon the melodramatic subjects which Verdi had hitherto affected. Much of his music is really graceful and refined, but his efforts to avoid vulgarity occasionally land him in the slough of sentimentality. Nevertheless, the pathos which characterizes some of the scenes has kept *La Traviata* alive.

Les *Vêpres Siciliennes,* which was produced in Paris in 1855, during the Universal Exhibition, only achieved a partial success, and *Simon Boccanegra* (1857), even in the revised and partly re-written form which was performed in 1881, has never been popular out of Italy. *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1861), on the other hand, was for many years a great operatic favorite, and has recently been revived with remarkable success. It is one of the best operas of Verdi's middle period. Like *Rigoletto,* it abounds in sharp and striking contrasts of character, the gay and brilliant music of the page Oscar, in particular, forming an effective foil to the more tragic portions of the score. The same feeling for contrast is perceptible in *La Forza del Destino,* in which the gloom of a most sanguinary plot is relieved by the humors of a vivandière and a comic priest. This work, which was produced at St. Petersburg in 1862, has never been popular out of Italy, and *Don Carlos,* which was written for the Paris Exhibition of 1867, seems also to be practically laid upon the shelf. It tells of the love of Don Carlos for his stepmother, Elizabeth, the wife of Philip II. of Spain, and apart from the dulness of the libretto, has the faults of a work of transition. Verdi's earlier manner was

beginning to lie heavily upon his shoulders, but he was not yet strong enough to sever his connection with the past. There are scenes in *Don Carlos* which foreshadow the truth and freedom of *Aida,* but their beauty is often marred by strange relapses into conventionality.

Aida (1871) was the result of a commission from Ismail Pacha, who wished to enhance the reputation of his new opera house at Cairo by the production of a work upon an Egyptian subject from the pen of the most popular composer of the day. The idea of the libretto seems to have been originally due to Mariette Bey, the famous Egyptologist, who had happened to light upon the story in the course of his researches. It was first written in French prose by M. Camille du Locle, in collaboration with Verdi himself, and afterwards translated by Signor Ghislanzoni.

Aida was an immense advance upon Verdi's previous work. The Egyptian subject, so remote from the ordinary operatic groove, seems to have tempted him to a fresher and more vivid realism, and the possibilities of local color opened a new world to so consummate a master of orchestration. The critics of the day at once accused Verdi of imitating Wagner, and certain passages undoubtedly suggest the influence of *Lohengrin,* but as a whole the score is thoroughly and radically Italian. In *Aida* Verdi's vein of melody is as rich as ever, but it is controlled by a keen artistic sense, which had never had full play before. For the first time in his career he discovered the true balance between singers and orchestra, and at once took his proper place among the great musicians of the world. Special attention must be directed to Verdi's use of local

color in *Aida*. This is often a dangerous stumbling-block to musicians, but Verdi triumphed most where all the world had failed. In the scene of the consecration of Radames, he employs two genuine Oriental tunes with such consummate art that this scene is not only one of the few instances in the history of opera in which Oriental color has been successfully employed, but, in the opinion of many, is the most beautiful part of the whole opera.

Another magnificent scene is the judgment of Radames, in the fourth act, where an extraordinary effect is gained by the contrast of the solemn voices of the priests within the chamber with the passionate grief of Amneris upon the threshold. The love scene, in the third act, shows the lyrical side of Verdi's genius in its most voluptuous aspect. The picture of the palm-clad island of Philae and the dreaming bosom of the Nile is divinely mirrored in Verdi's score. The music seems to be steeped in the odorous charm of the warm southern night.

Sixteen years elapsed after the production of *Aida* before the appearance of *Otello*. It was generally supposed that the aged composer had bidden farewell forever to the turmoil and excitement of the theatre, and the interest excited by the announcement of a new opera from his pen was proportionately keen.

The libretto of *Otello*, a masterly condensation of Shakespeare's tragedy, was from the pen of Arrigo Boito, himself a musician of no ordinary accomplishment.

In *Otello* Verdi advanced to undreamed-of heights of freedom and beauty. *Aida* was a mighty step to-

wards the light, but with *Otello* he finally shook off the trammels of convention. His inexhaustible stream of melody remained as pure and full as ever, while the more declamatory parts of the opera, down to the slightest piece of recitative, are informed by a richness of suggestion, and an unerring instinct for truth, such as it would be vain to seek in his earlier work. Rich and picturesque as much of the orchestral writing is, the voice remains, as in his earlier works, the keystone of the whole structure, and though motives are occasionally repeated with exquisite effect—as in the case of the "Kiss" theme from the duet in the first act, which is heard again in Othello's death scene—Verdi makes no pretence at imitating Wagner's elaborate use of guiding themes. There is an artistic reason for this, apart from the radical difference between the German and Italian views of opera.

In *Otello* the action is rapid for the most part, and in many scenes the music only aims at furnishing a suitable accompaniment to the dialogue. A symphonic treatment of the orchestra, in such scenes as that between Iago and Othello in the second act, would tend to obscure the importance of the dialogue upon the stage, every word of which, for the proper comprehension of the drama, must be forcibly impressed upon the listener's attention. In such a scene as the handkerchief trio, in which the situation remains practically the same for some time, a symphonic treatment of the orchestra is thoroughly in place, and here Verdi displays extraordinary skill in working out his theme, though even here his method has very little resemblance to that of Wagner.

Six years after *Otello* came *Falstaff,* produced in 1893, when Verdi was in his eightieth year. Boito's libretto is a cleverly abbreviated version of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor,* with the addition of two or three passages from *Henry IV.*

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about *Falstaff* is that it was written by a man eighty years old. It is the very incarnation of youth and high spirits. Verdi told an interviewer that he thoroughly enjoyed writing it, and one can well believe his words. He has combined a school-boy's sense of fun with the grace and science of a Mozart. The part-writing is often exceedingly elaborate, but the most complicated concerted pieces flow on as naturally as a ballad. The glorious final fugue is an epitome of the work. It is really a marvel of contrapuntal ingenuity, yet it is so full of bewitching melody and healthy animal spirits that an uncultivated hearer would probably think it nothing but an ordinary jovial finale. In the last act Verdi strikes a deeper note. He has caught the charm and mystery of the sleeping forest with exquisite art. There is an unearthly beauty about this scene, which is new to students of Verdi. In the fairy music, too, he reveals yet another side of his genius. Nothing so delicate nor so rich in imaginative beauty has been written since the days of Weber.

It is impossible as yet to speak with any degree of certainty as to Verdi's probable influence upon posterity. With all his genius he was perhaps hardly the man to found a school. He was not, like his great contemporary Wagner, one of the world's great revolutionists. His genius lay not in overturning systems and

in exploring paths hitherto untrodden, but in developing existing materials to the highest conceivable pitch of beauty and completeness. His music has nothing to do with theories, it is the voice of nature speaking in the idiom of art.

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Of the composers who modelled their style upon Verdi's earlier manner, the most important were Petrella (1813-1877); Apolloni (1822-1889), the composer of *L'Ebreo,* a melodrama of a rough-and-ready description, which was produced in 1855 and went the round of all the theatres of Italy; and Carlos Gomez (1839-1896), a Brazilian composer, whose opera, *Il Guarany,* was performed in London in 1872, and in New York in 1884. Verdi's vigor often degenerated into mere brutality in Gomez, but his work is by no means without power, though he has little claim to distinction of style. Of the many operas written by Marchetti (1835-1902) only one, *Ruy Blas,* founded upon Victor Hugo's play, achieved anything like permanent success. In form and general outline it owes much to Verdi's influence, but the vein of tender melody which runs through it strikes a note of individual inspiration.

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Arrigo Boito, to whom the University of Cambridge accorded the honor of an honorary degree in 1893, has written but one opera, *Mefistofele,* but his influence upon modern Italian music must be measured in inverse ratio to his productive power. When *Mefistofele* was originally produced in 1868, Verdi's genius was

still in the chrysalis stage, and the novelty and force of Boito's music made *Mefistofele,* even in its fall—for the first performance was a complete failure—a rallying point for the Italian disciples of truth and sincerity in music. In 1875 it was performed in a revised and abbreviated form, and since then has taken its place among the masterpieces of modern Italy.

Boito's libretto reproduces the atmosphere of Goethe's drama far more successfully than any other of the many attempts to fit *Faust* to the operatic stage. It is a noble poem, but from the merely scenic point of view it has many weaknesses. Its principal failing is the lack of one continuous thread of interest. The opera is merely a succession of episodes, each nicely calculated to throw fresh light upon the character of *Faust,* but by no means mutually connected.

Although *Mefistofele* is unsatisfactory as a whole, the extraordinary beauty of several single scenes ought to secure for it such immortality as the stage has to offer. Boito is most happily inspired by Margaret, and the two scenes in which she appears are masterpieces of beauty and pathos. In the garden scene he has caught the ineffable simplicity of her character with astonishing success. The contrast between her girlish innocence and the voluptuous sentiment of Gounod's heroine cannot fail to strike the most careless listener. The climax of this scene, the delightfully tender and playful quartet, which culminates in a burst of hysterical laughter, is a stroke of genius. In the prison scene Boito rises to still greater heights. The poignant pathos of the poor maniac's broken utterances, the

languorous beauty of the duet, and the frenzied terror and agony of the finale, are beyond praise.

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Amilcare Ponchielli (1834-1886) owed much to both Verdi and Boito, and his best work, *La Gioconda,* which was produced in 1876, bears unmistakable traces of the influence of *Mefistofele* and *Aida.* The libretto of *La Gioconda* is founded upon a gloomy play by Victor Hugo, *Angelo, Tyran de Padoue.* Ponchielli's opera overflows with melody of a rather commonplace description. He has, besides, a certain dramatic gift, and the concerted music in *La Gioconda* is powerful and effective. The ballet music is unusually good, and shows many favorable examples of Ponchielli's fondness for fanciful melodic designs, a mannerism which has been freely imitated by his pupils and followers. Another meritorious composer of the same school was Alfredo Catalani (1854-93), whose *Lorelei* (1890) and *La Wally* (1892) still hold the stage.

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The most important of the younger men is Giacomo Puccini, a composer who during the last decade has come to the front in a decisive manner. His first opera, *Le Villi,* was produced in 1884. The subject is a strange one to have taken the fancy of a southern composer. It is founded upon one of those weird traditions which seem essentially the property of Northern Europe. There is little attempt at vocal color in *Le Villi,* but the music is full of imaginative power. In the purely orchestral parts of the work the composer seems to have escaped from convention alto-

gether, and has written music instinct with weird suggestion and unearthly force.

Puccini's next opera, *Edgar* (1889), was a failure, but in *Manon Lescaut* (1893) he once more achieved success. His treatment of the Abbé Prévost's romance, as may well be imagined, differs *in toto* from that of Massenet. The libretto, in the first place, is laid out upon an entirely different plan. It consists of a string of detached scenes with but little mutual connection, which, without some previous knowledge of the story, would be barely comprehensible. The first act deals with the meeting of the lovers at Amiens and their flight to Paris. In the second act we find Manon installed as the mistress of Geronte di Lavoir, surrounded by crowds of admirers. Des Grieux penetrates to her apartment, and after a scene of passionate upbraiding persuades her to fly with him. But before they can depart they are interrupted by the entrance of Manon's irate protector, who, in revenge for her faithlessness, summons the police and consigns her to St. Lazare. The third act shows the quay at Havre, and the embarkation of the *filles de joie* for New Orleans; and the last act, which takes place in America, is one long duet between Manon and Des Grieux, ending with Manon's death.

Puccini looked at the story of Manon through Italian spectacles. His power of characterization is limited, and there is little in his music to differentiate Manon and her lover from the ordinary hero and heroine of Italian opera. The earlier scenes of the opera demand a lighter touch than he could then command, but in the tragic scene at Havre he is completely suc-

cessful. Here he strikes the true note of tragedy. The great concerted piece with which the act ends is a masterly piece of writing, and proves that Puccini can handle a form, which as employed by lesser men is a synonym for stereotyped conventionality, with superb passion and sincerity.

But Puccini's earlier successes sank into insignificance by the side of the triumph of *La Bohème,* which was produced in 1896. It was impossible to weave a connected story from Murger's famous novel. Puccini's librettists attempted nothing of the kind. They took four scenes each complete in itself and put them before the audience without any pretence of a connecting thread of interest.

Puccini's music echoes the spirit of Murger's romance with marvellous sincerity. It paints the mingled joy and grief of Bohemian life in hues the most delicate and tender. Like Murger, though dealing with things often squalid and unlovely, he never forgets that he is an artist. The sordid facts of life are gilded by the rainbow colors of romance. Puccini has caught the fanciful grace of Murger's style with the dexterity of genius. His music is thoroughly Italian in style, but he never strikes a false note. He dashes off the irresponsible gaiety of the earlier scenes with a touch which though light is always sure, and when the action deepens to tenderness, and even to pathos, he can be serious without falling into sentimentality and impressive without encroaching upon the boundaries of melodrama. *La Bohème* is one of the few operas of recent years which can be described as a masterpiece.

With *La Tosca,* which was produced in 1899, Puccini won another success, though for very different reasons from those which made *La Bohème* so conspicuous a triumph. The libretto is a clever condensation of Sardou's famous drama.

In *La Tosca* we are in a world very different from that of *La Bohème.* Here there is very little scope for grace and tenderness. All is deadly earnest. The melodramatic incidents of the story crowd one upon another, and in the rush and excitement of the plot the music often has to take a secondary place. Whenever the composer has a chance he utilizes it with rare skill. There are passages in *La Tosca* of great lyrical beauty, but as a rule the exigencies of the stage give little room for musical development, and a great deal of the score is more like glorified incidental music than the almost symphonic fabric to which we are accustomed in modern opera.

The history of *Madama Butterfly* (1904), Puccini's latest opera, is a strange one. At its production in Milan it was hissed off the stage and withdrawn after a single performance. No one seems to know why it failed to please the Scala audience, with whom Puccini had previously been a great favorite. Possibly the unfamiliar Japanese surroundings displeased the conservative Milanese, or the singers may have been inadequate. At any rate, when it was revived a few months later at Brescia, in a slightly revised form, it won more favor, and its London appearance the following year was a brilliant triumph. Since then it has gone the round of Europe and America, and is now probably the most popular opera in the modern reper-

tory. The story of *Madama Butterfly* is familiar to English hearers, the opera being founded upon the drama by David Belasco, which was played here with great success some years ago. Peculiarly apt for musical setting is the tale of the fascinating little "mousmé" who contracts a so-called Japanese marriage with a lieutenant in the American navy, and after a brief union is driven by his perfidy to suicide. That the story is what may be called edifying can hardly be claimed, but the world has long since ceased to expect—perhaps even to desire—that opera should inculcate a lofty moral code.

Puccini's music in this opera is the strongest work he has done so far. The score is richer and more solid than that of any of his earlier works, and the orchestration shows no falling off in ingenuity and resource. Melodically *Madama Butterfly* is perhaps not so fresh or abundant as *La Bohème,* but the composer's touch is firmer and surer in handling dramatic situations. *Madama Butterfly* is unquestionably one of the most interesting and important operas of modern times, as it is one of the most attractive. It has established Puccini more firmly than ever in the position of the leading operatic composer of the day.

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The name of Pietro Mascagni is chiefly connected in the minds of opera-goers with *Cavalleria Rusticana.* This work, which was produced in 1890, lifted its composer at once into popularity. Squalid as the story is, it is full of life and movement, and has that simple directness which is essential to success. The music is melodious, if not very original, and vigorous even

to brutality. Mascagni here shows a natural instinct for the theatre. His method is often coarse, but his effects rarely miss their mark. At its production *Cavalleria* was absurdly overpraised, but it certainly is a work of promise. Unfortunately the promise so far has not been fulfilled.

L'Amico Fritz and *I Rantzau,* two adaptations of novels by Erckmann-Chatrian, produced respectively in 1891 and 1892, have almost disappeared from the current repertory. The first is a delicate little story of an old bachelor's love for a pretty country girl, the second a village "Romeo and Juliet," showing how the internecine feud between two brothers is ended by the mutual love of their children. Mascagni's melodramatic style was ill suited to idylls of this kind. He drowned the pretty little stories in oceans of perfervid orchestration, and banged all the sentiment out of them with drums and cymbals.

Yet, in the midst of the desert of coarseness and vulgarity came oases of delicate fancy and imagination. The "Cherry Duet" in *L'Amico Fritz,* and the *Cicaleccio* chorus in *I Rantzau,* are models of refinement and finish, which are doubly delightful by reason of their incongruous environment. Unfortunately such gems as these only make the coarseness of their setting the more conspicuous, and on the whole the sooner the world forgets about *L'Amico Fritz* and *I Rantzau* the better it will be for Mascagni's reputation. *Guglielmo Ratcliff* and *Silvano,* both produced in 1895, have not been heard out of Italy, nor is there much probability that they will ever cross the Alps. *Zanetto* (1896), on the other hand, seems to contain the

best work which Mascagni has yet given to the world. It is founded upon François Coppée's charming duologue, *Le Passant,* a graceful scene between a world-weary courtesan and a youthful troubadour who passes beneath her balcony. Mascagni's music, which is scored only for strings and harp, is both delicate and refined, and instinct with a tender melancholy, for which it would be vain to look in his earlier works.

Iris (1898), an opera on a rather unpleasant Japanese story, has met with a certain degree of favor, but *Le Maschere* (1901), an attempt to introduce Harlequin and Columbine to the lyric stage, failed completely, nor does *Amica* (1905) seem to have done much to rehabilitate the composer's waning reputation. Mascagni has as yet done little to justify the extravagant eulogies with which his first work was greeted, and his warmest admirers are beginning to fear that the possibility of his doing something to redeem the early promise of *Cavalleria* is getting rather remote.

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Leoncavallo, though older than Mascagni, must be regarded as in a certain sense his follower, since his most popular work, *Pagliacci,* was undoubtedly inspired by *Cavalleria Rusticana.* As in *Cavalleria,* the theme of the story is squalid and unpleasant, though lucid and undeniably effective for stage purposes. The music makes an effective accompaniment to the exciting incidents of the plot, but it has few claims to intrinsic interest. Leoncavallo is never much of a melodist, and *Pagliacci* teems with reminiscences. The opera was probably written in a hurry, in order to pander to the taste for melodrama which *Cavalleria* had excited.

In *I Medici* (1893), a tale of the Florentine Renaissance, Leoncavallo aimed far higher. Here, too, however, his music is for the most part a string of ill-digested reminiscences, though scored with such extraordinary cleverness and fertility of resource as almost to disguise the inherent poverty of the score. *Chatterton* (1896) was a failure, but *La Bohème* (1897), though somewhat cast into the shade by Puccini's work upon the same subject, scored a decided success. Leoncavallo's music is conceived in a totally different mood from that of Puccini. He has little of Puccini's grace and tenderness, but he treated the scenes of Bohemian life with amazing energy and spirit, if with an occasional suggestion of brutality.

Zaza (1900), founded upon a French play which recently achieved a scandalous notoriety, has found little favor even in Italy. Leoncavallo's latest work, *Der Roland,* was written in response to a commission from the German Emperor, who believed that he had found in the composer of *I Medici,* a musician worthy to celebrate the mighty deeds of the Hohenzollerns. *Der Roland* was produced in a German version at Berlin in 1904, and in spite of Court patronage failed completely.

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Umberto Giordano, who, during the last few years has steadily worked his way to the front rank of Italian composers, started his career with a *succès de scandale* in *Mala Vita* (1892), a coarse and licentious imitation of *Cavalleria Rusticana.* There is far better work in *Andrea Chénier* (1896), a stirring tale of the French Revolution set to music which shows uncommon dram-

atic power and in certain scenes a fine sense of lyrical expression.

Fedora (1898), an adaptation of Sardou's famous drama, has less musical interest than *Andrea Chénier*, the breathless incidents of the plot giving but little scope for musical treatment.

Giordano touched a far higher level in *Siberia* (1903), a gloomy tale of Russian crime and punishment. The music of *Siberia* is more artistic than anything Giordano had previously written. The situations are skilfully handled, and the note of pity and pathos is touched with no uncertain hand. The opera is unequal, but the scene of the halt at the frontier is treated in a masterly fashion.

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Francesco Ciléa won no marked success until the production of his *Adriana Lecouvreur* in 1902. The plot is an adaptation of Scribe's famous play, but so trenchantly abbreviated as to be almost incomprehensible. The opening scene in the *foyer* of the *Comédie Française* is bright and lively, the handling of the score arousing pleasant reminiscences of Verdi's *Falstaff*, but the more dramatic passages in the struggle of Adrienne and her rival the Princess de Bouillon for Maurice de Saxe seem to be outside the scope of the composer's talent, and the great moments of the piece are somewhat frigid and unimpressive. There is a note of pathos, however, in Adrienne's death-scene, and the character of Michonnet is elaborated with skill and feeling. Ciléa's latest opera, *Gloria* (1907), a bloodthirsty story of the struggle between the Guelphs

and Ghibellines, does not appear to have won much favor in Italy.

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Edoardo Mascheroni's early laurels were won as a conductor, but in 1901 he sprang into fame as the composer of *Lorenza,* an opera which has met with much success in various cities of Spain and Spanish America as well as in Italy. *Lorenza* is a Calabrian version of the time-honored story of Judith and Holofernes, though in this case the Judith, so far from slaying her brigand Holofernes, falls in love with him, and ends by disguising herself in his cloak and allowing herself to be shot by the soldiers who come to capture the bandit chief. Mascheroni's score overflows with thoroughly Italian melody, and shows considerable knowledge of dramatic effect, which from a conductor of his experience was only to be expected.

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Of the numerous other Italian composers who bask in the sunshine of popularity south of the Alps, very few are known to fame beyond the frontiers of Italy. The younger men follow religiously in the steps of Mascagni or Puccini, while their elders still hang on to the skirts of *Aida.* Giacomo Orefice won a success of curiosity in 1901 with his *Chopin,* a strange work dealing in fanciful fashion with the story of the Polish composer's life, the melodies of the opera being taken entirely from Chopin's music.

Spinelli's *A Basso Porto* (1895), which was first performed in English by the Castle Square Company in New York in 1900, is redolent of Mascagni's influ-

ence, but the nauseating incidents of the plot make *Cavalleria,* by comparison, seem chaste and classical. The libretto deals with the vengeance wreaked by a villainous Neapolitan street loafer upon a woman who has played him false—a vengeance which takes the form of ruining her son by drink and play, and of attempting to seduce her daughter. In the end this egregious ruffian is murdered in the street by the mother of his two victims, just in time to prevent his being knifed by the members of a secret society whom he had betrayed to justice.

The music is not without dramatic vigor, and it has plenty of melody of a rough-and-ready kind. There is technical skill, too, in the treatment of the voices and in the orchestration, but hardly enough to reconcile an English audience to so offensive a book.

Salvatore Auteri-Manzocchi has never repeated the early success of *Dolores,* and Spiro Samara, a Greek by birth, but an Italian by training and sympathies, seems to have lost the secret of the delicate imagination which clearly made *Flora Mirabilis* a European success, though his *Martire,* a work of crude sensationalism, enjoyed an ephemeral success in Italy. Alberto Franchetti, the composer of *Asrael, Cristoforo Colombo,* and other works, conceived upon a scale grandiose rather than grand, appears anxious to emulate the theatrical glories of Meyerbeer, and to make up for poverty of inspiration by spectacular magnificence, but none of his operas has yet succeeded in crossing the Alps.

Modern French Opera.

If one were set upon paradox, it would not be far from the truth to say that up to the middle of the nineteenth century the most famous French composers had been either German or Italian. Certainly if Lulli, Glück, Rossini and Meyerbeer—to name only a few of the distinguished aliens who settled in Paris—had never existed, French opera of the present day would be a very different thing from what it actually is. Yet in spite of the strangely diverse personalities of the men who had most influence in shaping its destiny, modern French opera is an entity remarkable for completeness and homogeneity, fully alive to tendencies the most advanced, yet firmly founded upon the solid traditions of the past.

Gounod (1818-1893) was trained in the school of Meyerbeer, but his own sympathies drew him rather towards the serene perfection of Mozart. The pure influence of that mighty master, combined with the strange mingling of sensuousness and mysticism which was the distinguishing trait of his own character, produced a musical personality of high intrinsic interest, and historically of great importance to the development of music. If not the actual founder of modern French opera, Gounod is at least the source of its most pronounced characteristics.

His first opera, *Sapho* (1851), a graceful version of the immortal story of the Lesbian poetess's love and death, had never been really popular, but it is interesting as containing the germs of much that afterwards became characteristic in Gounod's style. In the final scene of Sappho's suicide, the young composer surpassed himself, and struck a note of sensuous melancholy which was new to French opera. *La Nonne Sanglante* (1854), his next work, was a failure; but in *Le Médecin malgré lui* (1858), an operatic version of Molière's comedy, he scored a success. This is a charming little work, instinct with a delicate flavor of antiquity, but lacking in comic power. It has often been sung in English as *The Mock Doctor.*

The year 1859 saw the production of *Faust,* the opera with which Gounod's name is principally associated. The libretto, by Barbier and Carré, does not of course claim to represent Goethe's play in any way. The authors had little pretension to literary skill, but they knew their business thoroughly. They fastened upon the episode of Gretchen, and threw all the rest overboard. The result was a well-constructed and thoroughly comprehensible libretto, with plenty of love-making and floods of cheap sentiment, but as different in atmosphere and suggestion from Goethe's mighty drama as could well be imagined.

Gounod's music struggles nobly with the tawdriness and sentimentality of the libretto. A good deal of the first and last acts is commonplace and conventional, but the other three contain beauties of a high order. The life and gaiety of the Kermesse scene in the second act, the sonorous dignity of Valentine's invocation

of the cross, and the tender grace of Faust's salutation —the last a passage which might have been written by Mozart—are too familiar to need more than a passing reference. In the fourth act also there is much noble music. Gounod may be forgiven even for the soldiers' chorus, in consideration of the masculine vigor of the duel terzetto—a purified reminiscence of Meyerbeer—and the impressive church scene. But the most characteristic part of the work is, after all, the love music in the third act. The dreamy languor which pervades the scene, the cloying sweetness of the harmonies, the melting beauty of the orchestration, all combine to produce an effect which was at that time entirely new to opera, and had no little share in forming the modern school. With all his admiration of Mozart, Gounod possessed little of his idol's genius for characterization.

The types in *Faust* do not stand out clearly. Margaret, for instance, is merely a sentimental school-girl; she has none of the girlish freshness and innocence of Goethe's Gretchen, and Mephistopheles is much more of a tavern bully than a fallen angel. Yet with all its faults *Faust* remains a work of a high order of beauty. Every page of the score tells of a striving after a lofty ideal, and though as regards actual form Gounod made no attempt to break new ground, the aim and atmosphere of *Faust,* no less than the details of its construction, contrast so strongly with the conventional Italianism of the day, that it may well be regarded as the inauguration of a new era in French music.

Faust marks the zenith of Gounod's career. After 1859 he was content for the most part merely to re-

peat the ideas already expressed in his *chef-d'œuvre,* while in form his later works show a distinctly retrograde movement. He seems to have known nothing of the inward impulse and development which led Wagner and Verdi from strength to strength.

Philémon et Baucis (1860) is a charming modernization of a classical legend. It adheres strictly to the conventional lines of opéra comique, and has little beyond its tuneful grace and delicate orchestration to recommend it. Nevertheless it is a charming trifle, and has survived many of Gounod's more pretentious works.

La Reine de Saba (1862) and *La Colombe* (1866) are now forgotten, but *Mireille* (1864), one of the composer's most delightful works, still enjoys a high degree of popularity. Gounod's music seems to have borrowed the warm coloring of the Provençal poet's romance. *Mireille* glows with the life and sunlight of the south. There is little attempt at dramatic force in it, and the one scene in which the note of pathos is attempted is perhaps the least successful in the whole opera. But the lighter portions of the work are irresistible. *Mireille* has much of the charm of Daudet's Provençal stories, the charm of warmth and color, independent of subject. More than one version of the opera exists. That which is now most usually played is in three acts. In the first version of the work there is a curious scene, in which Ourrias is drowned by a spectral ferryman in the waters of the Rhone, but this is now rarely performed.

In 1869 was produced *Roméo et Juliette,* an opera which, in the estimation of the majority of Gounod's

admirers, ranks next to *Faust* in the catalogue of his works. The libretto, apart from one or two concessions to operatic convention, is a fair piece of work, and at any rate compares favorably with the parodies of Shakespeare which so often do duty for libretti.

The composer of the third act of *Faust* could hardly fail to be attracted by *Romeo and Juliet*. Nevertheless Gounod was too pronounced a mannerist to do justice to Shakespeare's immortal love-story. He is, of all modern composers, the one whose method varies least, and throughout *Roméo et Juliette* he does little more than repeat in an attenuated form the ideas already used in *Faust*. Yet there are passages in the opera which stand out in salient contrast to the monotony of the whole, such as the exquisite setting of Juliet's speech in the balcony scene, beginning—

"Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face,"

which conveys something more than an echo of the virginal innocence and complete self-abandonment of Shakespeare's lines, or the more commonplace but still beautiful passage at the close of the act, suggested by Romeo's line—

"Sleep dwell upon thine eyes."

The duel scene is vigorous and effective, and the song allotted to Romeo's page—an impertinent insertion of the librettist's—is intrinsically delightful.

It is typical of the musician that he should put forth his full powers in the chamber duet, while he actually omits the potion scene altogether, which is the legitimate climax of the act. In the original version

of the opera there was a commonplace cavatina allotted to Juliet at this point, set to words which had but a remote connection with Shakespeare's immortal lines, but it was so completely unworthy of the situation that it was usually omitted, and when the opera was revised for production at the Grand Opéra in 1888, Gounod thought it wiser to end the act with the Friar's discourse to Juliet, rather than attempt once more to do justice to a scene which he knew to be beyond his powers. The last act is perhaps the weakest part of the opera. Barbier and Carré's version of Shakespeare's magnificent poetry is certainly not inspiring; but in any case it is difficult to believe that Gounod's suave talent could have done justice to the piteous tragedy of that terrible scene.

Gounod's last three operas did not add to his reputation. *Cinq Mars* (1877) made little impression when it was first produced, but it has recently been performed by the Carl Rosa Company in England with some success. The libretto is a poor one. It deals in conventional fashion with the conspiracy of Cinq Mars against Richelieu, but the incidents are not well arranged and the characters are the merest shadows. Much of the music is tuneful and attractive, though cast in a stiff and old-fashioned form, and the masque-music in the second act is as fresh and melodious as anything Gounod ever wrote. In *Polyeucte* (1878) he attempted a style of severe simplicity, in fancied keeping with Corneille's tragedy. There are some noble pages in the work, but as a whole it is distressingly dull, and *Le Tribut de Zamora* (1881) was also an emphatic failure.

Gounod's later works, as has already been pointed out, show a distinct falling off from the standard attained in *Faust,* as regards form as well as in ideas. As he grew older he showed a stronger inclination to return to obsolete models. *Le Tribut de Zamora* reproduces the type of opera which was popular in the days of Meyerbeer. It is cut up into airs and recitatives, and the accompaniment is sedulously subordinated to the voices. Without desiring to discredit the beauties of *Mireille* or *Roméo et Juliette,* one cannot help thinking that it would have been better for Gounod's reputation if he had written nothing for the stage after *Faust.*

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Very soon after its production Gounod's masterpiece began to exert a potent influence upon his contemporaries. One of the first French composers to admit its powers was Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896). Thomas was an older man than Gounod, and had already written much for the stage without achieving any very decisive success. He was a man of plastic mind, and was too apt to reproduce in his own music the form and even the ideas which happened to be popular at the time he wrote. Most of his early works are redolent of Auber or Halévy. Gounod's influence acted upon him like a charm, and in *Mignon* (1866) he produced a work which, if not strictly original, has an element of personality too distinctive to be ignored.

If we can dismiss all thoughts of Goethe and his *Wilhelm Meister* from our minds, it will be possible to pronounce Barbier and Carré's libretto a creditable piece of work. The score of *Mignon* reveals the hand

of a sensitive and refined artist upon every page. It has no claims to greatness, and few to real originality, but it is full of graceful melody, and is put together with a complete knowledge of stage effect.

The *Hamlet* (1868) of Thomas is accepted as a masterpiece in Paris, where the absurdities of the libretto are either ignored or condoned. In England and America, Shakespeare's tragedy is fortunately so familiar that such a ridiculous parody of it as Barbier and Carré's libretto has not been found endurable. Much of the music is grandiose rather than grand, but in the less exacting scenes there is not a little of the plaintive charm of *Mignon.* Ophelia's mad scene, which occupies most of the last act, is dramatically ludicrous, but the music is brilliant and captivating, and the ghost scene, earlier in the opera, is powerful and effective. Thomas employs several charming old Scandinavian tunes in the course of the work, which give a clever tinge of local color to the score.

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With Bizet (1838-1875) the influence of Wagner is felt in French music for the first time. *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (1863), his first work, follows traditional models pretty closely for the most part, and though containing music of charm and originality, does not, of course, represent Bizet's genius in its most characteristic aspects. It tells the story of the love of two Cingalese pearl-fishers for the priestess Leila. There are only three characters in the piece, and very little incident. The score owes a good deal to Félicien David's *Le Désert,* but there is a dramatic force about sev-

eral scenes which foreshadows the power and variety of *Carmen*. *La Jolie Fille de Perth* (1867) is to a great extent a tribute to the powerful influence of Verdi. It is a tuneful and effective work, but cannot be called an advance on *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*. In *Djamileh* (1872) we find the real Bizet for the first time. The story tells of the salvation of a world-wearied youth, who is won back to life by the love and devotion of his slave. It is a clever study in Oriental color, but has little dramatic value, though it was thought very advanced at the time of its production. In 1875, the year of Bizet's death, *Carmen* was produced. The libretto is founded upon Mérimée's famous novel.

Carmen was coldly received at first. Its passionate force was miscalled brutality, and the suspicion of German influence, which Bizet's clever use of guiding thems excited, was in itself enough to alienate the sympathies of the average Frenchman in the early seventies. Since its production *Carmen* has gradually advanced in general estimation, and is now one of the most popular operas in the modern repertory. It is unnecessary to do more than allude to its many beauties, the nervous energy of the more declamatory parts, the brilliant and expressive orchestration, the extraordinarily clever use of Spanish rhythms, and the finished musicianship displayed upon every page of the score. The catalogue of Bizet's works is completed by *Don Procopio,* an imitation of Italian opera buffa dating from his student days in Rome. It was unearthed and produced at Monte Carlo in 1906. It is a bright and lively little work, but has no pretensions to orig-

inal value. Bizet's early death deprived the French school of one of its brightest ornaments. To him is largely due the development of opéra comique which has taken place within the last twenty years, a development which has taken it almost to the confines of grand opera.

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Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880), though German by birth, may fitly be mentioned here, since the greater part of his life was spent in Paris, and his music was more typically French than any of his Gallic rivals. His innumerable opéras bouffes are scarcely subjects for serious criticism, but his posthumous opéra comique, *Les Contes d' Hoffmann* (1881), is decidedly more ambitious in scope, and still holds the stage by virtue of its piquant melody and clever musicianship. In Germany, where *Les Contes d' Hoffmann* is still very popular under the name of *Hoffmann's Erzählungen,* it is usually performed in a revised version, which differs considerably from the French original as regards plot and dialogue, though the music is practically the same. Hoffmann, the famous story-teller, is the hero of the opera, which, after a prologue in a typically German beer cellar, follows his adventures through three scenes, each founded upon one of his famous tales. In the first we see him fascinated by the mechanical doll Olympia, in the second he is at the feet of the Venetian courtesan Giulietta, while in the third we assist at his futile endeavors to save the youthful singer Antonia from the clutches of the mysterious Dr. Miracle.

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The career of César Franck (1822-1890) offers a striking contrast to that of his famous contemporary Gounod. Fame came betimes to Gounod. While he was still a young man his reputation was European. He wrote his masterpiece at forty, and lived on its success for the remaining thirty years of his life. Since his death his fame has sadly shrunk, and even *Faust* is beginning to "date" unmistakably. The name of César Franck, on the other hand, until his death was hardly known beyond a narrow circle of pupils, but during the last fifteen years his reputation has advanced by leaps and bounds. At the present moment there is hardly a musician in Paris who would not call him the greatest French composer—he was a Belgian by birth, but what of that?—of the nineteenth century. His fame was won in the concert-room rather than in the theatre, but the day may yet come when his *Hulda* will be a familiar work to opera-goers. It was produced in 1894 at Monte Carlo, but, in spite of the deep impression which it created, has not yet been heard in Paris. The action passes in Norway in the times of the Vikings. Hulda is carried off by a band of marauders, whose chief she is compelled to wed. She loves Eyolf, another Viking, and persuades him to murder her husband. After a time he proves faithless to her, whereupon she kills him and throws herself into the sea. This gloomy tale is illustrated by music of extraordinary power and beauty. Although Franck only avails himself of guiding themes to a limited extent, in mastery of the polyphonic style his work will compare with Wagner's most elaborate scores. In fact, the opulence of orchestral resource and the virility of

inspiration displayed in *Hulda* strikingly recall the beauties of *Tristan und Isolde*. *Ghiselle*, a work left unfinished by the composer and completed by several of his pupils, was produced in 1896 at Monte Carlo. Although by no means upon the same level as *Hulda*, *Ghiselle* also contains much fine music, and will doubtless be heard of again.

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Léo Delibes (1836-1891) made no pretensions to the dignity and solidity of César Franck's style. He shone principally in ballet-music, but *Lakmé* (1883), his best-known opera, is a work of much charm and tenderness. Delibes's music never rises to passion, but it is unfailingly tender and graceful, and is scored with consummate dexterity. He has a pretty feeling, too, for local color, and the scene in Lakmé's garden is full of a dreamy sensuous charm.

Le Roi l'a dit (1873) is a dainty little work upon an old French subject, as graceful and fragile as a piece of Sèvres porcelain. *Kassya*, which the composer left unfinished, was orchestrated by Massenet, and produced in 1893. In this work Delibes attempted a tragic story to which his delicate talent was ill suited, and the opera achieved little success. Delibes is a typically French musician. Slight as his works often are, the exquisite skill of the workmanship saves them from triviality. He made no pretensions to advanced views, and though he occasionally trifles with guiding themes, the interest of his works rests almost entirely upon his dainty vein of melody and the finish of his orchestration.

With Delibes may be classed Ferdinand Poise (1828-1892) a composer who made a specialty of operas founded upon the comedies of Molière and his contemporaries, and Ernest Guiraud (1837-1892), whose *Piccolino* (1876) is one of the daintiest of modern comic operas. His *Frédégonde,* produced in Paris in 1895, proved emphatically that his talent did not lie in the direction of grand opera.

* * *

Edouard Lalo (1823-1892), a composer of no little charm and resource, owes his fame chiefly to *Le Roi d'Ys,* which was successfully produced at the Opéra Comique in 1888, and was played in London in 1901. It is a gloomy story, founded upon a Breton legend. Margared and Rozenn, the two daughters of the King of Ys, both love the warrior Mylio, but Mylio's heart is given to Rozenn. The slighted Margared in revenge betrays her father's city to Karnac, the defeated enemy of her country, giving him the keys of the sluices which protect the town from the sea. Karnac opens the sluices and the tide rushes in. The town and its people are on the point of being overwhelmed, when Margared, stricken by remorse, throws herself into the waters. St. Corentin, the patron saint of Ys, accepts the sacrifice, and the sea retires.

Le Roi d'Ys is an excellent specimen of the kind of opera which French composers of the second rank used to write before the sun of Wagner dawned upon their horizon. It is redolent of Meyerbeer and Gounod, and though some of the scenes are not without vigor, it is

impossible to avoid feeling that in *Le Roi d'Ys* Lalo was forcing a graceful and delicate talent into an uncongenial groove. He is at his best in the lighter parts of the work, such as the pretty scene of Rozenn's wedding, which is perfectly charming.

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Emmanuel Chabrier (1842-1894), after writing a comic opera of thoroughly Gallic *verve* and grace, *Le Roi malgré lui,* announced himself as a staunch adherent of Wagner in the interesting but unequal *Gwendoline,* which was performed at Brussels in 1886.

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Benjamin Godard (1849-1895), one of the most prolific of modern composers, won no theatrical success until the production of *La Vivandière* (1895), an attractive work constructed upon conventional lines, in which the banality of the material employed is often redeemed by clever treatment. Emile Paladilhe won a brilliant success in 1886 with *Patrie,* and among other meritorious composers of what may be called the pre-Wagnerian type are Victorin Joncières (1839-1903) and Théodore Dubois.

* * *

Of living French composers Camille Saint Saëns is the unquestioned head, and is considered by some to be the most versatile musician of modern times. Some of his operas achieved considerable success, and not one of them is without beauty of a high order. Over *La Princesse Jaune* (1872) and *Le Timbre d' Argent* (1877) there is no need to linger. *Samson et Dalila,*

his first work of importance, was produced at Weimar in 1877, but, in spite of its success there and in other German towns, did not find its way on to a Parisian stage until 1890. The libretto follows the Biblical narrative with tolerable fidelity.

Guiding themes are used in the opera, but not to any important extent, and the construction of the score owes very little to Wagner. Yet though the main outlines of the work adhere somewhat closely to a type which is now no longer popular, there is little fear of *Samson et Dalila* becoming old-fashioned. The exquisite melody with which it overflows, combined with the inimitable art of the orchestration, make it one of the most important and attractive works of the modern French school. *Etienne Marcel* (1879) and *Proserpine* (1887) did not meet with much public approval, but *Henry VIII.* is a work of high interest, which, though produced so long ago as 1883, is still popular in Paris.

Saint Saëns has treated the various scenes with uncommon variety and force, and indeed the whole opera is a masterly piece of writing. He uses guiding themes with more freedom than in *Samson et Dalila,* but the general outline of *Henry VIII.* is certainly not Wagnerian in type. The same may be said of *Ascanio,* a work produced in 1890, with only partial success. *Phryné,* which was given at the Opéra Comique in 1893, is on a much less elaborate scale. It is a musicianly little work, but in form follows the traditions of the older school of opéra comique with almost exaggerated fidelity. *Les Barbares,* a story of the Teutonic invasion of Gaul, was originally produced in Paris in

1901. The plot is of a well-known kind. Marcomir, the leader of the barbarian invaders, is subjugated by the charms of the priestess Floria, who, after the requisite amount of hesitation, falls duly into his arms. Finally Marcomir is stabbed by Livia, whose husband he had killed in battle. Saint Saëns's music is admirable from the point of view of workmanship, but it is devoid of the inspiration of his other operas. *Les Barbares* was received with all the respect due to a work from the pen of the leading musician of modern France, but it would be useless to pretend that it is likely to keep its place in the current repertory.

Hélène (1904) is a more favorable example of Saint Saëns's many-sided talent. The libretto, which is the work of the composer himself, deals with the flight of Helen and Paris from Sparta, and the greater part of the one act of which the opera consists is devoted to an impassioned duet between the lovers. The apparitions of Venus and Pallas, the one urging Helen upon her proposed flight, the other dissuading her from it, give variety to the action, but the work as a whole lacks dramatic intensity, though it rises to a climax of some power. Saint Saëns's music is interesting and musicianly from first to last. Like Berlioz in his *Prise de Troie* he has plainly gone to Glück for his inspiration, and in its sobriety and breadth of design no less than in its classic dignity of melody and orchestration, his music often recalls the style of the mighty composer of *Alceste*.

Saint Saëns's latest opera, *L'Ancêtre* (1906), is a gloomy story of a Corsican vendetta. The instrumental part of the work is treated in masterly fashion.

The opera received its first production at Monte Carlo, but it has not been performed elsewhere.

Saint Saëns's theory of opera has been to combine song, declamation, and symphony in equal proportions, and thus, though he has written works which cannot fail to charm, he seems often to have fallen foul of both camps in the world of music. The Wagnerians object to the set form of his works, and the reactionaries condemn the prominence which he often gives to the declamatory and symphonic portions of his score. He is by nature a thorough eclectic, and his works possess a deep interest for all lovers of good music. Indeed, in the consensus of critical opinion, his operas and other musical works have placed him at the head of all living French composers.

* * *

To Ernest Reyer success came late. The beauties of his early works, *Érostrate* (1852) and *La Statue* (1861), were well known to musicians; but not until the production of *Sigurd* in 1884 did he gain the ear of the public. Sigurd is the same person as Siegfried, and the plot of Reyer's opera is drawn from the same source as that of *Götterdämmerung.*

Although not produced until 1884, *Sigurd* was written long before the first performance of *Götterdämmerung,* but in any case no suspicion of plagiarism can attach to Reyer's choice of Wagner's subject. There is very little except the subject common to the two works. *Sigurd* is a work of no little power and beauty, but it is conceived upon a totally different plan from that followed in Wagner's later works. Reyer uses

guiding themes, often with admirable effect, but they do not form the foundation of his system. Vigorous and brilliant as his orchestral writing is, it is generally kept in subservience to the voices, and though in the more declamatory parts of the opera he writes with the utmost freedom, he has a lurking affection for four-bar rhythm, and many of the songs are conveniently detachable from the score. *Sigurd* is animated throughout by a loftiness of design worthy of the sincerest praise. Reyer's melodic inspiration is not always of the highest, but he rarely sinks below a standard of dignified efficiency. In *Salammbô,* a setting of Flaubert's famous romance which was produced at Brussels in 1890, he did not repeat the success of *Sigurd. Salammbô* is put together in a workmanlike way, but there is little genuine inspiration in the score. The local color is not very effectively managed, and altogether the work is lacking in those qualities of brilliancy and picturesqueness which Flaubert's Carthaginian story seems to demand.

Reyer and Saint Saëns both show traces of the influence of Wagner, but though guiding themes are often employed with excellent effect in their works, the general outlines of their operas remain very much in accordance with the form handed down by Meyerbeer.

* * *

Massenet, on the other hand, has drunk more deeply at the Bayreuth fountain. His early comic operas, *La Grand' Tante* (1867) and *Don César de Bazan* (1872) are purely French in inspiration, and even *Le Roi de Lahore* (1877), his first great success, does not show

any very important traces of German influence. Its success was largely due to the brilliant spectacle of the Indian Paradise in the third act. The score is rich in sensuous melody of the type which we associate principally with the name of Gounod, and the subtle beauties of the orchestration bear witness to the hand of a master.

In *Hérodiade* (1881) the influence of Wagner becomes more noticeable, though it hardly amounts to more than an occasional trifling with guiding themes. The libretto is a version of the Biblical story of St John the Baptist, considerably doctored to suit Parisian taste. When *Hérodiade* was performed in London in 1904, under the title of *Salome,* the names of some of the characters were altered and the scene of the story was transferred to Ethiopia, in order to satisfy the conscientious scruples of the Lord Chamberlain. Thus according to the newest version of Massenet's opera Jean is a mysterious prophet—presumably a species of Mahdi—who makes his appearance at the court of Moriame, King of Ethiopia. He denounces the sins of Queen Hesatoade in no measured terms, but the latter cannot induce her husband to avenge her wrongs, since Moriame dare not venture for political reasons to proceed to extreme measures against so popular a character as Jean. Jean has an ardent disciple in Salome, a young lady whose position in Ethiopian society is not very clearly defined by the librettist, though in the end she turns out to be Hesatoade's long-lost daughter. Jean's regard for Salome is purely Platonic, but Moriame loves her passionately, and when he finds out that Jean is his rival he promptly orders him to prison,

where he is put to death after a passionate scene with Salome, who kills herself in despair. Massenet has taken full advantage of the passionate and voluptuous scenes of the libretto, which lend themselves well to his peculiar style. In certain scenes his treatment of guiding themes reaches an almost symphonic level, and the opera is throughout a singularly favorable specimen of his earlier manner. He has recently revised the score, and added a scene between the Queen and a Chaldean soothsayer, which is one of the most powerful in the opera.

Manon, which was first performed in 1884, shows perhaps no advance in the matter of form upon *Hérodiade,* but the subject of the opera is so admirably suited to Massenet's tender and delicate talent that it remains one of his most completely successful works. The Abbé Prévost's famous romance had already been treated operatically by Auber, but his *Manon Lescaut* was never really a success, and had been laid upon the shelf many years before Massenet took the story in hand.

Massenet's dainty score reproduces the spirit of the eighteenth century with rare felicity. A note of genuine passion, too, is not wanting, and an ingenious use of guiding themes binds the score together into a harmonious whole. A novelty in its arrangement is the plan of an orchestral accompaniment to the dialogue. Æsthetically this is perhaps hardly defensible, but in several scenes—notably that of Cours-la-Reine, in which Manon's agitated interview with the Count stands out in forcible relief against the graceful back-

ground formed by a minuet heard in the distance—the result is completely successful.

Le Cid (1885) and *Le Mage* (1891), two works produced at the Paris Opera, may be passed over as comparative failures, but *Esclarmonde* (1889) marks an important stage in Massenet's career. The libretto is drawn from an old French romance. Esclarmonde, the Princess of Byzantium, who is a powerful enchantress, loves Roland, the French knight, and commands her minion spirits to guide him to a distant island, whither she transports herself every night to enjoy his company. He betrays the secret of their love, and thereby loses Esclarmonde, but by his victory in a tournament at Byzantium he regains her once more.

Massenet's music is a happy combination of Wagner's elaborate system of guiding themes with the sensuous beauty of which he himself possesses the secret. As regards the plan of *Esclarmonde* his indebtedness to Wagner was so patent, that Parisian critics christened him "Mlle. Wagner," but nevertheless he succeeded in preserving his own individuality distinct from German influence. No one could mistake *Esclarmonde* for the work of a German; in melodic structure and orchestral coloring it is French to the core.

Werther was written in 1886, though not actually produced until 1892, when it was given for the first time at Vienna. The plot of Goethe's famous novel is a rather slight foundation for a libretto, but the authors did their work neatly and successfully.

Though in tone and sentiment more akin to *Manon,* in form *Werther* resembles *Esclarmonde.* It is constructed upon a basis of guiding themes, which are

often employed with consummate skill. The uniform melancholy of the story makes the music slightly monotonous, and though the score cannot fail to delight musicians, it has hardly color or variety enough to be generally popular. *Le Portrait de Manon,* a delicate little sketch in one act, and *Thaïs,* a clever setting of Anatole France's beautiful romance, both produced in 1894, will not be likely to add much to Massenet's reputation. *La Navarraise* (1894), produced during the same year in London, and in 1895 in New York, was apparently an attempt to imitate the melodramatic extravagance of Mascagni. There is little in Massenet's score but firing of canons and beating of drums.

The musical interest centres in a charming duet in the opening scene and a delicious instrumental nocturne. The action of the pieces is breathless and vivid, and the music scarcely pretends to do more than furnish a suitable accompaniment to it. Of late years Massenet has confined himself principally to works of slight calibre, which have been on the whole more successful than many of his earlier and more ambitious efforts.

Sapho (1897), an operatic version of Daudet's famous novel, and *Cendrillon* (1899), a charming fantasia on the old theme of Cinderella, both succeeded in hitting Parisian taste. No less fortunate was *Grisélidis* (1901), a quasi-mediæval musical comedy, founded upon the legend of Patient Grizel, and touching the verge of pantomime in the characters of a comic Devil and his shrewish spouse.

Of Massenet's later works none has been more successful than *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame* (1902),

which, besides winning the favor of Paris, has been performed in Germany, England and America with much success. Here we find Massenet in a very different vein from that of *Manon,* or indeed any of his earlier works. The voluptuous passion of his accustomed style is exchanged for the mystic raptures of monasticism. Cupid has doffed his bow and arrows and donned the conventional cowl. *Le Jongleur* is an operatic version of one of the prettiest stories in Anatole France's *Étui de Nacre.* Rarely has Massenet written anything more delightful than this exquisite song, so fresh in its artful simplicity, so fragrant with the charm of mediæval monasticism.

Mention must be made, for the sake of completeness, of the performance at Nice, in 1903, of Massenet's thirty-year-old oratorio, *Marie Magdeleine,* in the guise of a "drame lyrique." French taste, it need hardly be said, is very different from that of other countries with regard to what should and should not be placed upon the stage, but once granted the permissibility of making Jesus Christ the protagonist of an opera, there is comparatively little in *Marie Magdeleine* to offend religious susceptibilities. The work is divided into four scenes: a palm-girt well outside the city of Magdala, the house of Mary and Martha, Golgotha, and the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, where occurs what a noted French critic in writing about the first performance described as "l'apparition très réussie de Jésus."

In *Chérubin* (1905) Massenet returned to his more familiar manner. The story pursues the adventures of Beaumarchais's too fascinating page after his disappearance from the scene of "Le Mariage de Figaro."

What these adventures are it is needless to detail, save that they embrace a good deal of duelling and even more love-making. Massenet's music is as light as a feather. It ripples along in the daintiest fashion, sparkling with wit and gaiety, and if it leaves no very definite impression of originality, its craftsmanship is perfection itself.

Ariane (1906) is a far more serious affair. It is a return to the grander manner of *Hérodiade* and *Le Cid,* and proves conclusively that the musician's hand has not lost its cunning. Catulle Mendès's libretto is a clever embroidery of the world-old tale of Ariadne and Theseus, the figure of the gentle Ariadne being happily contrasted with that of the fiery and passionate Phædra, who succeeds her sister in the affections of the fickle Theseus. The death of Phædra, who is crushed by a statue of Adonis which she had insulted, is followed by a curious and striking scene in Hades, whither Ariadne descends in order to bring her sister back to the world of life. The opera, according to tradition, ends with the flight of Theseus and Phædra, while the deserted Ariadne finds death in the arms of the sirens, who tempt her to seek eternal rest in the depths of the sea.

Massenet's music is conspicuous for anything rather than novelty of invention or treatment, but though he is content to tread well-worn paths, he does so with all his old grace and distinction of manner, and many of the scenes in *Ariane* are treated with an uncommon degree of spirit and energy.

Massenet's latest work, *Thérèse* (1907), is a return to the breathless palpitating style of *La Navarraise.*

It is a story of the revolution, high-strung and emotional. Thérèse is the wife of the Girondin Thorel, who has bought the castle of Clerval, in the hope of eventually restoring it to its former owner, Armand de Clerval. Armand returns in disguise, on his way to join the Royalists in Vendée. He and Thérèse were boy-and-girl lovers in old days, and their old passion revives. Armand entreats her to fly with him, which, after the usual conflict of emotions, she consents to do. But meanwhile Thorel, who has been amiably harboring the émigré, is arrested and dragged to the scaffold. This brings about a change in Thérèse's feelings. She sends Armand about his business and throws in her lot with Thorel, defying the mob and presumably sharing her husband's fate. Massenet's music is to a certain extent thrust into the background by the exciting incidents of the plot. The cries of the crowd, the songs of the soldiers and the roll of the drums leave but little space for musical development. Still *Thérèse* contains many passages of charming melody and grace, though it will certainly not rank among the composer's masterpieces.

Massenet is one of the most interesting of modern French musicians. On the one hand, he traces his musical descent from Gounod, whose sensuous charm he has inherited to the full; on the other, he has proved himself more susceptible to the influence of Wagner than any other French composer in his generation. The combination is extremely piquant, and it says much for Massenet's individuality that he has contrived to blend such differing elements into a fabric of undeniable beauty.

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Alfred Bruneau is a composer whose works have excited perhaps more discussion than those of any living French composer. By critics who pretend to advanced views he has been greeted as the rightful successor of Wagner, while the conservative party in music have not hesitated to stigmatize him as a wearisome impostor. *Kérim* (1887), his first work, passed almost unnoticed. *Le Rêve,* an adaptation of Zola's novel, was produced in 1891, at the Opéra Comique, and in the same year was performed in London. The scene is laid in a French cathedral city. The period is that of the present day.

Angélique, the adopted child of a couple of old embroiderers, is a dreamer of dreams. All day she pores over the lives of the saints until the legends of their miracles and martyrdoms become living realties to her mind, and she hears their voices speaking to her in the silence of her chamber. She falls in love with a man who is at work upon the stained glass of the Cathedral windows. This turns out to be the son of the Bishop. The course of their love does not run smooth. The Bishop, in spite of the protestations of his son, refuses his consent to their marriage. Angélique pines away, and is lying at the point of death when the Bishop relents, and with a kiss of reconciliation restores her to life. She is married to her lover, but in the porch of the Cathedral dies from excess of happiness.

The entire work is rigorously constructed upon Wagner's system of representative themes. Each act runs its course uninterruptedly without anything approaching a set piece. Two voices are rarely heard together, and then only in unison. So far Bruneau faithfully

follows the system of Wagner. Where he differs from his master is in the result of his efforts; he has nothing of Wagner's feeling for melodic beauty, nothing of his mastery of orchestral resource, and very little of his musical skill. The melodies in *Le Rêve*—save for an old French *chanson,* which is the gem of the work—are for the most part arid and inexpressive. Bruneau handles the orchestra like an amateur, and his attempts at polyphony are merely ridiculous. Yet, in spite of all this, the vocal portions of the work follow the inflections of the human voice so faithfully as to convey a feeling of sincerity. Ugly and monotonous as much of *Le Rêve* is, the music is alive. In its strange language it speaks with the accent of truth. Here, at any rate, are none of the worn out formulas which have done duty for so many generations. In defence of Bruneau's work, it may be urged that his dreary and featureless orchestration, so wholly lacking in color and relief, may convey to some minds the cool grey atmosphere of the quiet old Cathedral town, and that much of the harshness and discordance of his scope is, at all events, in keeping with the iron tyranny of the Bishop. *Le Rêve,* at any rate, was not a work to be passed over in silence; it was intended to create discussion, and discussion it certainly created.

In *L'Attaque du Moulin* (1893), another adaptation of Zola, Bruneau set himself a very different task. The contrast between the placid Cathedral close and the bloody terrors of the Franco-Prussian war was of the most startling description. This opera was received with more general favor than *Le Rêve.* In it Bruneau shows an inclination to relax the stern prin-

ciples of his former creed. The action is often interrupted by solos and duets of a type which approaches the conventional, though for the most part the opera follows the Wagnerian system. The result of this mixture of styles is unsatisfactory. *L'Attaque du Moulin* has not the austere sincerity of *Le Rêve,* and the attempts to bid for popular favor are not nearly popular enough to catch the general ear. Bruneau has little melodic inspiration, and when he tries to be tuneful he generally ends in being merely commonplace. The orchestral part of the opera, too, is far less satisfactory than in *Le Rêve.* There, as has already been pointed out, the monotony and lack of color were to a certain extent in keeping with the character of the work, but in *L'Attaque du Moulin,* where all should be color and variety, the dull and featureless orchestration is a serious blot.

Messidor (1897) and *L'Ouragan* (1907) had very much the same reception as the composer's earlier operas. The compact little phalanx of his admirers greeted them with enthusiasm, but the general public remained cold. *Messidor,* written to a prose libretto by Zola, is a curious mixture of socialism and symbolism. The foundation of the plot is a legend of the gold-bearing river Ariège, which is said to spring from a vast subterranean cathedral, where the infant Christ sits on his mother's lap playing with the sand which falls from his hands in streams of gold. Intertwined with this strange story is a tale of the conflict between a capitalist and the villagers whom his gold-sifting machinery has ruined. There are some fine moments in the drama, but the allegorical element which plays so

large a part in it makes neither for perspicacity nor for popularity.

L'Ouragan is a gloomy story of love, jealousy, and revenge. The scene is laid among the fisherfolk of a wild coast—presumably Brittany—where the passions of the inhabitants seem to rival the tempests of their storm-beaten shores in power and intensity. It contains music finely imagined and finely wrought, and it is impossible not to feel that if Bruneau's sheer power of invention were commensurate with his earnestness and dramatic feeling he would rank very high among contemporary composers.

In *L'Enfant Roi* (1905), a *comédie lyrique* dealing with *bourgeois* life in modern Paris, which plainly owed a good deal to Charpentier's *Louise,* the composer essayed a lighter style with no very conspicuous success, but his latest work, *Naïs Micoulin* (1907), a Provençal tale of passion, revenge and devotion, seems to contain more of the elements of lasting success.

Bruneau's later works can hardly be said to have fulfilled the promise of *Le Rêve,* but they unquestionably show a fuller command of the resources of his art. He is a singular and striking figure in the world of modern music, and it is impossible to believe that he has spoken his last word as yet. His career will be watched with interest by all who are interested in the development of opera.

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Of the younger men the most prominent are Vincent d'Indy, Gustave Charpentier, and Claude Debussy.

Vincent d'Indy's *Fervaal* was produced at Brussels, in 1897, and was given in Paris shortly afterwards. It is a story of the Cevennes in heroic times, somewhat in the Wagnerian manner, and the music is defiantly Wagnerian from first to last. Clever as *Fervaal* unquestionably is, it is valuable less as a work of art than as an indication of the real bent of the composer's talent. The dramatic parts of the opera suggest nothing but a brilliant exercise in the Wagnerian style, but in the lyrical scenes, such as the last act in its entirety, there are evidences of an individuality of conspicuous power and originality. *L'Étranger* (1903) hardly bore out the promise of *Fervaal,* in spite of much clever musicianship. The plot is an adaptation of the legend of the Flying Dutchman, and the unmitigated gloom of the work prevented it from winning the degree of favor to which its many merits entitled it.

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Gustave Charpentier's *Louise,* produced in 1900, hit the taste of the Parisian public immediately and decisively. The strongly marked Parisian flavor of the libretto ensured the success of *Louise* in Paris, but the music counts for a good deal, too. Charpentier owes much to Bruneau, but his music is more organic in quality, and his orchestration is infinitely superior. Nothing could be more brilliant than his translation into music of the sights and sounds of Parisian street life. The vocal parts of *Louise* are often ugly and expressionless, but they are framed in an orchestral setting of curious alertness and vivacity. It remains

to be seen how Charpentier's unquestionable talent will adapt itself to work of a wider scope than *Louise*.

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The fame of Claude Debussy is a plant of recent growth, and dates, so far as the general public is concerned, from the production of *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1902, though for some years before he had been the idol of an intimate circle of adorers. *Pelléas et Mélisande* is founded upon Maeterlinck's play of that name, the action of which it follows closely, but not closely enough, it seems, to please the poet, who publicly dissociated himself from the production of Debussy's opera, and, metaphorically speaking, cursed it root and branch.

Debussy has aimed at creating a musical equivalent for the Maeterlinck "atmosphere." The score of *Pelléas et Mélisande* is a pure piece of musical impressionism, an experiment in musical pioneering the value of which it is difficult to judge off-hand. He has wilfully abjured melody of any accepted kind and harmony conforming to any established tradition. His music moves in a world of its own, a dream-world of neutral tints, shadowy figures, and spectral passions. The dreamy unreality of the tale is mirrored in the vague floating discords of the music, and whatever the critics may say, the effect is singularly striking and persuasive. At present there are no rumors of a successor to *Pelléas et Mélisande,* but whatever the future of Debussy may be, he at any rate deserves the credit of striking a note entirely new to the history of music.

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There are many other living French composers who,

if not destined to revolutionize the world of opera, have already done admirable work, and may yet win a more than local reputation. Charles Marie Widor has recently in *Les Pêcheurs de Saint Jean* (1905) given a worthy success to his twenty-year-old *Maître Ambros.* Xavier Leroux, a pupil of Massenet, has carried on his master's traditions, somewhat Wagnerized and, generally speaking, brought up to date, in *Astarté* (1900), *La Reine Fiammette* (1903), *William Ratcliff* (1906), and *Théodora* (1907). Remarkable promise has been shown by Paul Dukas in *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* (1907); by Camille d'Erlanger in *Le Fils de l'Étoile* (1904), and *Aphrodite* (1906); by George Marty in *Daria* (1905); by Georges Hüe in *Titania* (1903), and by Gabriel Dupont in *La Cabrera* (1905), while a characteristic note of tender sentiment was struck by Reynaldo Hahn in *La Carmélite* (1902).

* * *

André Messager's name is chiefly associated in England and America with work of a lighter character, but it must not be forgotten that he is the composer of two of the most charming opéras comiques of modern times, *La Basoche* (1890) and *Madame Chrysanthème* (1893).

This is perhaps the most convenient place to refer to the remarkable success recently achieved by the Flemish composer Jan Blockx, whose *Herbergprinses,* originally produced at Antwerp in 1896, has been given in French as *Princesse d'Auberge* in Brussels and many French towns. The heroine is a kind of Flemish Carmen, a wicked siren named Rita, who seduces the

poet Merlyn from his bride, and, after dragging him to the depths of infamy and despair, dies in the end by his hand. The music, though not without a touch of coarseness, overflows with life and energy, and one scene in particular, that of a Flemish Kermesse, is masterly in its judicious and convincing use of local color. Jan Blockx's later works, *Thyl Uylenspiegel* (1900), *De Bruid van der Zee* (1901), and *De Kapelle* (1903), do not appear to have met with equal success. Another Belgian composer, Paul Gilson, has of late won more than local fame by his *Princesse Rayon de Soleil,* produced at Brussels in 1905.

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In modern times the stream of opéra comique has divided into two channels. The first, as we have seen, under the guidance of such men as Bizet, Delibes, and Massenet has approached so near to the confines of grand opera, that it is often difficult to draw the line between the two *genres.*

The second, under the influence of Offenbach, Hervé, and Lecocq, has shrunk into opéra bouffe, a peculiarly Parisian product, which, though now for some reason under a cloud, has added sensibly to the gaiety of nations during the past thirty years.

The productions of this school are by no means to be despised from the merely musical point of view, and though the recent deaths of Audran, Planquette and other acknowledged masters of the genre have left serious gaps in the ranks of comic opera writers, there seems to be no valid reason for despairing of the future of so highly civilized and entertaining a form of musical art.

The Opera in England.

Soon after the dealth of Purcell, the craze for Italian opera seems to have banished native art completely from the English stage. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the most popular form of entertainment consisted of operas set to a mixture of English and Italian words, but after a time the town, to quote Addison, tired of understanding only half the work, determined for the future to understand none of it, and these hybrid works gave place, after the arrival of Handel, to the splendid series of masterpieces extending from *Rinaldo* to *Deidamia.*

From time to time attempts were made to gain a footing for English opera in London, and in 1728 *The Beggar's Opera* achieved a triumph so instantaneous and overwhelming as seriously to affect the success of Handel's Italian enterprise at the Haymarket Theatre. It is supposed that the origin of *The Beggar's Opera* is due to a remark of Swift's that "a Newgate pastoral might be made a pretty thing." Gay borrowed the idea, and constructed *The Beggar's Opera* around a cut-throat highwayman of the name of Macheath, while Dr. Pepusch arranged the music from old English and Scotch melodies, together with some of the most popular tunes of the day. The success of the work was very remarkable. It was performed sixty-two times

during the first season, and even now is still to be heard occasionally. It was the foundation of that exceedingly simple form of art, the English ballad opera, which was so widely popular in London during the closing years of the eighteenth century, and early in the nineteenth. At first, composers availed themselves largely of traditional or popular tunes in arranging the music which diversified the dialogue of these works, but as time went on they became more ambitious, and the operas of Storace and his contemporaries are for the most entirely original.

Meanwhile an attempt had been made by Arne to adapt the mannerisms of the Italian stage to English opera. His *Artaxerxes,* which was produced in 1762, was constructed strictly upon the lines of Italian opera, being made up throughout entirely of airs and recitative. It had a most encouraging reception, but the enterprise seems to have borne little fruit, for after a few years we hear no more of English opera "after the Italian manner," and London seems to have been content with Italian opera and ballad operas of the already familiar type. The traditions of the latter were successfully carried on by Storace, a naturalized Italian, Dibdin, Shield, Hook, and many others, many of whose songs are still popular, though the works of which they once formed part have long been forgotten. The ballad operas of these composers were of unimaginable *naïveté,* and depended entirely upon their simple tunefulness for such favor as they won. Sir Henry Bishop (1786-1855) raised the artistic standard of this form of art considerably. There is real musical interest in some of his concerted pieces,

and many of his choruses, which are familiar to us under the incorrect name of glees, are capitally written. Had Bishop possessed the necessary energy and enterprise, he might have founded a school of English opera which would have compared favorably even with its continental contemporaries.

To John Barnett (1802-1890) belongs the credit of writing the first English opera, strictly so called, since Arne's *Artaxerxes*. *The Mountain Sylph,* which was produced in 1834, fulfils all the requirements of the operatic form. It is besides a work of genuine charm and power, and retained its popularity for many years.

* * *

It is unfortunate for the memory of Balfe (1808-1870) that the one opera by which he is now remembered, the perennial *Bohemian Girl,* should be perhaps the least meritorious of his many works. Balfe had to the full his share of that vein of maudlin sentiment which is typical of one side of the Irish character. He appears to have had little ambition, and was content throughout his career to fit his saccharine melodies to whatever words the librettists of the day chose to supply. No one can deny him the possession of fluent and commonplace melody, but there his claim to musicianship ends.

* * *

Wallace (1814-1865) was more of a musician than Balfe, but his best-known work, *Maritana,* is but little superior to *The Bohemian Girl.* The libretto by Fitzball is founded on the romance of *Don Cesar de Bazan. Lurline,* an opera constructed upon the Rhenish legend

of Lorelcy, has perhaps more musical merit than *Maritana,* but the libretto is more than usually indefinite. Wallace rivalled Balfe in the facility and shallowness of his melody. Yet, with all their weaknesses, his operas contain many tunes which have wound themselves into popular affection, and in the eyes of certain audiences, *Maritana* stands second only to *The Bohemian Girl.*

* * *

Sir Julius Benedict (1804-1885), though German by birth, may conveniently be classed as an Englishman. Trained in the school of Weber, he was a musician of a very different calibre from Balfe and Wallace. His earlier works, *The Gipsy's Warning* and *The Brides of Venice,* are now forgotten, but *The Lily of Killarney,* which was produced in 1862, is still deservedly popular. It is founded upon Boucicault's famous drama, *The Colleen Bawn.*

Benedict's music touches a higher level than had been reached by English opera before. He was, of course, directly inspired by Weber, but there runs through the opera a vein of plaintive melancholy which is all his own. The form in which *The Lily of Killarney* is cast is somewhat superannuated, but for tenderness of melody and unaffected pathos it will compare very favorably with many more pretentious works which have succeeded it.

* * *

Sir George Macfarren (1813-1887) was a prolific writer for the stage, but of all his works *Robin Hood* is the only one which is still occasionally performed. It has little of the buoyancy which the theme demands,

but there is a great deal of sound writing in the concerted music, and some of the ballads are tuneful enough in a rather commonplace way.

* * *

Edward James Loder (1813-1865) was a good musician, and under more favorable conditions might have produced work of permanent interest. His best known work is *The Night Dancers,* an opera founded upon the legend which has been used by the Italian composer Puccini in his *Le Villi.*

* * *

About the middle of the nineteenth century the destinies of English opera were controlled by a company presided over by Miss Pyne and Mr. Harrison, for which Balfe and Macfarren wrote a good many of their works. In more recent times the place of this institution was taken by the Carl Rosa company, which was founded in 1875 by a German violinist named Carl Rosa. Such opportunities as were presented to English musicians, during the latter part of the last century, of hearing their works sung upon the stage were principally due to his efforts. One of the first works actually written in response to a commission by Carl Rosa was *Esmeralda,* an opera by Arthur Goring Thomas (1851-1892), which was produced in 1883. It is founded upon Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame,* and the libretto was written by T. Marzials and A. Randegger.

When the opera was produced in French at Convent Garden in 1890, the composer introduced several alterations into the score. An elaborate air for Esmeralda in the prison was the most important of the additions, and the close of the opera was also materially changed. It

was generally thought, however, that the original version was the more successful. Thomas's training and sympathies were thoroughly French, and, except for the words, *Esmeralda* has very little claim to be called an English opera. The score is extremely graceful and charming, and it is only at the more dramatic moments that the composer fails to do justice to his theme.

In *Nadeshda,* an opera written upon a Russian subject, which was produced in 1885, there was much charming music, but the libretto was uninteresting, and the success of the work never equalled that of its predecessor. The most attractive part of the opera was the delightfully quaint and original ballet music, to which local color was given by clever orchestration and ingenious use of Russian rhythms.

* * *

To the initiative of the Carl Rosa company was due the production of Mr. Frederick Corder's *Nordisa,* a work of undoubted talent though suffering from a fatal lack of homogeneity, and of two operas by Sir Alexander Mackenzie. The first of these, *Colomba,* was produced in 1883. It achieved a success, but the gloomy character of the libretto prevented it from becoming really popular. It is founded upon Prosper Mérimée's famous Corsican tale.

Mackenzie's music is exceedingly clever and effective. He uses guiding themes with judgment and skill, and his employment of some old Corsican melodies is also very happy. *Colomba* is a work which eminently merits revival, and it will be probably heard of again. *The Troubadour,* which was produced a few years later, failed completely. The story is thoroughly dull, and

completely failed to inspire the musician. Sir Alexander Mackenzie has recently completed the score of an opera on the subject of Dickens's *Cricket on the Hearth,* the production of which is awaited with much interest.

* * *

During the closing years of the nineteenth century the fortunes of English opera, never very brilliant, reached a lower point than at any time in the country's musical history. The Carl Rosa opera company fell upon evil days, and was compelled to restrict its energies almost entirely to the performance of stock operas, while at Covent Garden the opportunities afforded to native composers were few and far between. In these disheartening circumstances it is not surprising that English musicians were not encouraged to devote their powers to a form of art in which so little prospect of success could be entertained. What they might have achieved under happier conditions the operatic career of Sir Charles Stanford suggests in the most convincing manner. Stanford is a composer whose natural endowment conspicuously fits him for operatic work, and he has grasped such opportunities as have been vouchsafed to him with almost unvarying success. Had he been blessed with a more congenial environment he would have taken rank with the foremost operatic composers of his time.

His first opera, *The Veiled Prophet,* was originally performed at Hanover in 1881, but was not actually heard in London until it was produced at Covent Garden in 1894. The libretto, an admirable condensation of Moore's well-known poem from the pen of W. Barclay Squire, gave the composer ample oppor-

tunities for picturesque and dramatic effect. Stanford's music is tuneful and vigorous throughout, and such weaknesses as are occasionally perceptible are due rather to inexperience of the stage than to any failure in inspiration.

The Canterbury Pilgrims, written to a libretto by Gilbert à Beckett, which was produced in 1884, was happily named by some one at the time an English *Meistersinger,* and, indeed, it is not difficult to imagine what model Stanford had in his mind when writing his brilliant and genial opera.

Stanford's music is a happy compromise between old and new. In his use of guiding themes, and in his contrapuntal treatment of the orchestra, he follows Wagner, but his employment of new devices is tempered by due regard for established tradition. He is happiest in dealing with humorous situations, and in the lighter parts of the opera his music has a bustling gaiety which fits the situation very happily. In the more passionate scenes he is less at home, and the love duet in particular is by no means entirely satisfactory.

Stanford's next work, *Savonarola,* was performed in London for the first time by a German company under Dr. Hans Richter in 1884. Interesting as much of the music is, the performance was not successful, partly owing to the almost unmitigated gloom of the libretto. Far the best part of the work, both musically and dramatically, is the prologue, which tells of the love of Savonarola for Clarice, of her marriage, and of his renouncement of the world. The merit of this scene is so great that it might be worth the composer's while

to produce it as a one-act opera, in which form it would be safe to predict for it a genuine success.

Stanford's *Shamus O'Brien,* a romantic opera dealing with a typically Irish subject, was produced in 1896 with great success. The form of the work is that of a genuine comic opera, the dialogue being interspersed throughout with music, but although less ambitious in form than his earlier works, *Shamus O'Brien* has a deeper artistic importance. With all its cleverness and ingenuity, *The Canterbury Pilgrims* is German in method and expression, and it is merely by the accident of language that it can be classed as British opera at all. In *Shamus O'Brien,* the composer drew his inspiration from the melodies and rhythms of his native Ireland, and the result is that his work ranks as an original and independent effort, instead of being merely a brilliant exercise.

In 1901, Stanford's *Much Ado About Nothing* was produced at Covent Garden. The libretto, by Julian Sturgis, is a clever adaptation of Shakespeare's comedy, in which the action is judiciously compressed into four scenes without any incidents of importance being omitted. First we have the ball at Leonato's house, with some love-making for Claudio and Hero, and a wit-combat between Beatrice and Benedick. Here, too, Don John hatches his plot against Hero's honor, and Don Pedro unfolds his scheme for tricking Beatrice and Benedick into mutual love. The second act takes place in Leonato's garden. Claudio serenades his mistress, who comes down from her balcony and joins him in a duet. Then follows the cozening of Benedick, and the act ends effectively by Don John

showing to Claudio the supposed Hero admitting Borachio to her chamber. The third scene is in the church, following Shakespeare very closely, and the last takes place in an open square in Messina with Hero's tomb on one side, where, after a scene with Dogberry, Borachio confesses his crime, and Hero is restored to her lover.

Stanford's music is a masterly combination of delicate fancy and brilliant humor, and when serious matters are in hand he is not found wanting. A distinctive feature of the work is the absence of Wagnerian influence. Stanford uses guiding themes, it is true, and often in a most suggestive manner, but they do not form the basis of his score. If foreign influence there be in *Much Ado About Nothing,* it is that of Verdi in his *Falstaff* manner. Like Verdi, Stanford strikes a true balance between voices and instruments. His orchestra prattles merrily along, underlining each situation in turn with happy emphasis, but it never attempts to dethrone the human voice from its pride of place. Like the blithe Beatrice, *Much Ado About Nothing* was born under a star that danced. It overflows with delicious melody, and its orchestration is the *ne plus ultra* of finished musicianship. Since its production in London, it has been performed with great success in the English provinces by the Moody-Manners opera company, and has lately been produced in Germany.

* * *

Dr. Frederic Cowen is another English musician who, in more favorable circumstances, would doubtless have proved himself an operatic composer of

distinction. *Pauline,* a work founded upon *The Lady of Lyons,* which was played by the Carl Rosa company in 1876, seems to have won little success. *Thorgrim,* produced by the same company in 1889, was more fortunate. The plot is founded upon an Icelandic saga, and has but little dramatic interest. There is much charm in Dr. Cowen's music, and some of the lighter scenes in the opera are gracefully treated, but his talent is essentially delicate rather than powerful, and the fierce passions of the Vikings scarcely come within its scope.

Signa (1893), an opera founded upon Ouida's novel of that name, showed traces of Italian influence. It was produced at Milan with considerable success, and was afterwards given in London. In *Harold* (1895), Dr. Cowen attempted too ambitious a task. The tale of the conquest of England was ill suited to his delicate muse, and the opera achieved little more than a *succès d'estime.*

* * *

Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) was the most successful English composer of opera during the later years of the nineteenth century. His name is, of course, principally associated with the long series of light operas written in conjunction with William S. Gilbert; but it must not be forgotten that he also essayed grand opera with no little success.

The experiment made by the Carl Rosa company, in 1899, of playing his early oratorio, *The Martyr of Antioch,* as an opera had, not unnaturally, very little success, but *Ivanhoe* (1891) showed that Sullivan could adapt his style to the exigencies of grand opera with

singular versatility. *Ivanhoe* was handicapped by a patchy and unequal libretto, but it contained a great deal of good music, and, probably, the last of it has not yet been heard. For the present generation, however, Sullivan's fame rests almost entirely upon his comic operas, which, indeed, have already attained something like the position of classics.

Sullivan's first essay in comic opera dates from the year 1867, which saw the production of his *Contrabandista* and *Cox and Box,* both written to libretti by Sir Frank Burnand, and both showing not merely admirable musicianship and an original vein of melody, but an irresistible sense of humor and a rare faculty for expressing it in music. *Thespis* (1871) first brought him into partnership with Mr. Gilbert, a partnership which was further cemented by *Trial by Jury* (1875). It was *Trial by Jury* that opened the eyes of connoisseurs to the possibilities lying within the grasp of these two young men, whose combined talents had produced a work so entirely without precedent in the history of English, or, indeed, of any music.

The promise of *Trial by Jury* was amply borne out by *The Sorcerer* (1877), which remains in the opinion of many the best of the whole series of Gilbert and Sullivan operas; but indeed there is hardly one of them that has not at one time or another been preferred above its fellows by expert opinion. *The Sorcerer* naturally gave Sullivan more scope than *Trial by Jury.* Here, for the first time, he showed what he could do in what may be called his old English vein, in reproduction of the graceful dance measures of

olden time, and in imitations of Elizabethan madrigals so fresh and tuneful that they seem less the resuscitation of a style long dead than the creation of an entirely new art-form. In a different vein was the burlesque incantation, a masterpiece of musical humor, in which the very essence of Mr. Gilbert's strange topsy-turvydom seems transmuted into sound.

In *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1878), Sullivan scored his first great popular success. *The Sorcerer* had appealed to the few; *Pinafore* carried the masses by storm. In humor and in musicianship alike it is less subtle than its predecessor, but it triumphed by sheer dash and high spirits. There is a smack of the sea in music and libretto alike. *Pinafore* was irresistible, and Sullivan became the most popular composer of the day. *The Pirates of Penzance* (1880) followed the lines of *Pinafore,* with humor perhaps less abundant, but with an added touch of refinement. There are passages in *The Pirates* tenderer in tone, one might almost say more pathetic, than anything Sullivan had previously written—passages which gave more than a hint of the triumphs he was later to win in that mingling of tears and laughter of which he had the secret.

In *Patience* (1881), musician and librettist mutually agreed to leave the realm of farcical extravagance, and to turn to satire of a peculiarly keen-edged and delicate kind—that satire which caresses while it cuts, and somehow contrives to win sympathy for its object even when it is most mordant. There are people nowadays who have been known to declare that the "æsthetic" movement had no existence outside the vivid imagination of Gilbert and *Punch.* In the eighties, however,

everybody believed in it, and believed too that *Patience* killed it. What is quite certain is that, whoever killed it, *Patience* embalmed it in odors and spices of the most fragrant and costly description, so that it has remained a thing of beauty even to our own day.

In *Iolanthe* (1882), Gilbert reaches the dizziest height of topsy-turvydom to which he ever climbed, and set Sullivan to solve what was perhaps the most difficult problem of his whole career. To bring the atmosphere of fairyland into the House of Lords was a task which the most accomplished master of musical satire might well have refused, but Sullivan came victoriously through the ordeal. His *Iolanthe* music, with its blending of things aërial with things terrene, and its contrast between the solid qualities of our hereditary legislators and the irresponsible ecstasy of fairyland, is one of the most surprising feats of musical imagination that even his career can furnish.

In *Princess Ida* (1884), which is, so to speak, a burlesque of a burlesque, his task was easier. *Princess Ida* contains some of his most brilliant excursions into the realm of parody—parodies of grand opera, parodies of the traditional Handelian manner, parodies of sentimental love-making—but it also contains some of the purest and most beautiful music he ever wrote. Some of Sullivan's melodies, indeed, would be more fitting on the lips of Tennyson's romantic princess than on those of Gilbert's burlesque "suffragette."

Princess Ida was not appreciated at its true value, and still awaits its revenge, but in *The Mikado* (1885) the two collaborators scored the greatest success of their career. The freshness and novelty of its sur-

roundings—Japan had not then, so to speak, become the property of the man in the street—counted for something in the triumph of *The Mikado,* but it is unquestionably one of the very best of the series. Gilbert never wrote wittier or more brilliant dialogue, and Sullivan never dazzled his admirers by more astonishing feats of musicianship.

Ruddigore (1887) was less successful than any of its predecessors. If the satire of *Princess Ida* was just a shade above the heads of the Savoy audience, the satire of *Ruddigore* was perhaps a shade below them. *Ruddigore* is a burlesque of transpontine melodrama, and a very good burlesque, too; but the Savoy audience knew next to nothing about transpontine melodrama, and so the satire was missed and the piece fell flat. It was a pity, because Sullivan's music was in his happiest manner. There may yet, however, be a future for *Ruddigore.*

The Yeomen of the Guard (1888) opened fresh ground. For the moment Gilbert turned his back upon topsy-torvydom and Sullivan approached the frontiers of grand opera. *The Yeomen of the Guard* has a serious plot, and at times lingers on the threshold of tragedy. Sullivan caught the altered spirit of his collaborator with perfect sympathy, and struck a note of romantic feeling which was unique in his career.

With *The Gondoliers* (1889) the scene brightened again, and merriment reigned supreme once more. Perhaps at times there was a suspicion of weariness in Gilbert's wit, and some of Sullivan's melodies had not all the old distinction of manner, but the piece was

an incarnation of liveliness and gaiety, and its success rivalled the historic glories of *The Mikado.*

With *The Gondoliers* came the first solution of continuity in the Gilbert and Sullivan partnership. Differences arose. Gilbert retired from the councils of the Savoy Theatre, and Sullivan had to look out for a new collaborator. He found one in Sydney Grundy, and their *Haddon Hall* was produced in 1892. In spite of charming music, reflecting very gracefully the old English atmosphere of the story, its success was only moderate, and the world of music was much relieved to hear that the differences between Gilbert and the Savoy authorities had been adjusted, and that the two famous collaborators were to join forces once more. Unfortunately, *Utopia* (1893) echoed but faintly the magical harmonies of the past. The old enchantment was gone; the spell was shattered. Both collaborators seemed to have lost the clue that had so often led to triumph.

Again they drifted apart, and Sullivan turned once more to his old friend, Sir Frank Burnand. Together they produced *The Chieftain* (1894), a revised and enlarged version of their early indiscretion, *The Contrabandista.* Success still held aloof, and for the last time Sullivan and Gilbert joined forces. In *The Grand Duke* (1896) there were fitful gleams of the old splendor, notably in an amazing sham-Greek chorus, which no one but Sullivan could have written; but the piece could not for a moment be compared to even the weakest of the earlier operas.

The fate of *The Beauty Stone* (1898), written to a libretto by Messrs. Pinero and Comyns Carr, was

even more deplorable. Fortunately Sullivan's collaboration with Captain Basil Hood brought him an Indian summer of inspiration and success. *The Rose of Persia* (1900), if not upon the level of his early masterpieces, contained better music than he had written since the days of *The Gondoliers,* and at least one number—the marvellous Dervish quartet—that for sheer invention and musicianship could hardly be matched even in *The Mikado* itself. There was a great deal of charming music, too, in *The Emerald Isle* (1901), which Sullivan left unfinished at his death, and which Edward German completed.

During his lifetime, Sullivan was called the English Auber by people who wanted to flatter him, and the English Offenbach by people who wanted to snub him. Neither was a very happy nickname. He might more justly have been called the English Lortzing, since he undoubtedly learned more than a little from the composer of *Czar und Zimmermann,* whose comic operas he heard during his student days at Leipzig. But Sullivan owed very little to anyone. His genius was thoroughly his own and thoroughly English, and in that lies his real value to posterity. For if there is ever to be a national English opera, it must be had by writing English music, not by producing elobarate exercises in the manner of Wagner, Verdi, Massenet, Strauss, or anybody else. Most great artistic enterprises spring from humble sources, and young aspirants need not be ashamed of producing a mere comic opera or two before attacking a full-fledged music-drama. Did not Wagner himself recommend a budding bard to start his musical career with a Singspiel?

It is safest as a rule to begin building operations from the foundation, and a better foundation for a school of English opera than Sullivan's series of comic operas could hardly be desired.

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In his younger days Sullivan had many disciples. Alfred Cellier, the composer of the world-famous *Dorothy,* was the best of them. Edward Solomon was hardly more than a clever imitator. The mantle of Sullivan seems now to have fallen on Edward German, who, besides completing Sullivan's unfinished *Emerald Isle,* won brilliant success with his enchanting *Merrie England.* His *Princess of Kensington* was saddled with a dull libretto, but the music was hardly inferior to that of its predecessor, and much the same may be said of his latest work, *Tom Jones.*

* * *

The recent performances of English composers in the field of grand opera have not been very encouraging. Few, indeed, are the opportunities offered to native musicians of winning distinction on the lyric stage, and of late has been witnessed the curious spectacle of English composers setting French or German libretti in the hope of finding in foreign theatres the hearing that is denied them in their own. Miss Ethel Smyth is the most prominent and successful of the composers whose reputation has been made abroad.

Her *Fantasio* has not been given in England, but *Der Wald,* an opera in one act, after having been produced in Germany, was given at Covent Garden in 1902, with conspicuous success. The libretto, which

is the work of the composer herself, is concise and dramatic. Heinrich, the forester, loves Röschen, the woodman's daughter, but on the eve of their marriage he has the misfortune to attract the notice of Iolanthe, the mistress of his liege lord, the Landgrave Rudolf. He rejects her advances, and in revenge she has him stabbed by her followers. This is the bare outline of the story, but the value of the work lies in the highly poetical and imaginative framework in which it is set. Behind the puny passions of man looms the vast presence of the eternal forest, the mighty background against which the children of earth fret their brief hour and pass into oblivion. The note which echoes through the drama is struck in the opening scene—a tangled brake deep in the heart of the great stillness, peopled by nymphs and fauns whose voices float vaguely through the twilight. Every scene in the drama is tinged with the same mysterious influence, until at the close the spirit-voices chant their primeval hymn over the bodies of the lovers in the gathering night.

Miss Smyth's music has the same mastering unity. The voice of the forest is the keynote of her score. Perhaps it can hardly be said that she has altogether succeeded in translating into music the remarkable conception which is the foundation of her libretto. Had she done so, she might at once have taken her place as a follower of Wagner, the only composer of modern times who has handled a philosophical idea of this kind in music with any notable success. But her music has an individual strain of romance, which stamps her as a composer of definite personality, while in

the more dramatic scenes she shows a fine grip of the principles of stage effect.

Her latest work, *Strandrecht,* in English *The Wreckers* (1906), was produced at Leipzig, and shortly afterwards was given at Prague. It has not yet found its way to London. The scene is laid in Cornwall in the eighteenth century. The inhabitants of that wild coast, though fervent Methodists, live by "wrecking," in which they are encouraged by their minister. Thurza, the minister's faithless wife, alone protests against their cruelty and hypocrisy, and persuades her lover, a young fisherman, to light fires in order to warn mariners from the dangerous coast. The treachery, as it seems to the rest of the villagers, of Thurza and her lover is discovered, and after a rough-and-ready trial they are left in a cavern close to the sea to be overwhelmed by the rising tide. Miss Smyth's music is spoken of as strongly dramatic, and marked by a keen sense of characterization.

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The operas of Isidore de Lara, a composer who, in spite of his name, is said to be of English extraction, may conveniently be mentioned here. It is generally understood that the production of these works at Covent Garden was due to causes other than their musical value, but in any case they do not call for detailed criticism. De Lara's earlier works, *The Light of Asia, Amy Robsart* and *Moina,* failed completely. There is better work in *Messaline* (1899). The musical ideas are poor in quality, but the score is put together in a workmanlike manner, and the orchestration is often clever. The libretto, which recounts the

intrigues of the Empress Messalina with two brothers, Hares and Helion, a singer and a gladiator, is in the highest degree repellent, and it would need far better music than De Lara's to reconcile the average audience to such a revolting subject. De Lara's latest production, *Sanga* (1906), does not seem to have sustained the promise of *Messaline.* Another composer whom necessity has driven to ally his music to a foreign libretto is Herbert Bunning, whose opera, *La Princesse Osra,* was produced at Covent Garden in 1902. Alick Maclean, whose *Quentin Durward* and *Petruccio* had already shown remarkable promise, has lately won considerable success in Germany with *Die Liebesgeige.*

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Scanty is the catalogue of noteworthy operas with English words produced in recent years. The most remarkable of them are Colin MacAlpin's *The Cross and the Crescent,* which won the prize offered by Charles Manners in 1903 for an English opera, and Nicholas Gatty's *Greysteel,* a very able and musicianly setting of an episode from one of the Norse sagas, which was produced at Sheffield in 1906.

It is difficult to be sanguine as to the prospects of English opera. Circumstances are certainly against the production of original work in England, though it is legitimate to hope that the recent revival of interest in Sullivan's works may lead Engilsh composers to devote their energies to the higher forms of comic opera. Anything is better than the mere imitation of foreign models which has so long been characteristic of English opera.

The Opera in Spain.

The national form of operatic entertainment in Spain is the so-called zarzuela, which is very popular. The zarzuela is an operetta or short opera, generally in two acts. Its name is derived from the royal castle of Zarzuela, where the first Spanish works of this kind were performed in the early part of the seventeenth century.

The popularity of the zarzuela is due largely to the introduction of sparkling melodies and spirited dances alternating with diverting dialogue. Thus it reflects the typical vivacity of the Spanish race, and it would be no easy task to supplant the zarzuela in its popularity with Spanish audiences at the present time. Felipe Pedrel traces its origin to the musical dialogues (*dialogos para cantar*) of Jean de Ericma (1468-1534). He admits, however, that the name "zarzuela" was not applied in Spain to a dramatic mixture of music and dialogue till the year 1628, when *Le Jardin de Falerina* was performed at the castle of Zarzuela.

The best known and most successful composer of the zarzuela was Francisco Asenjo Barbieri, born at Madrid in 1823. After a varied career as member of a military band and a theatre orchestra, he joined an Italian opera troupe and became the chief promoter of an association for instituting a Spanish national opera and the distinctively Spanish type of operetta

(zarzuela) in opposition to Italian opera. In the course of his active connection with the opera in Madrid, he composed, without collaboration, twenty-five operas of the Spanish type in one act, five in two acts, and nineteen in three acts. In collaboration with other composers, he supplied the musical score for three operettas in one act, one operetta in two acts, five operas in three acts, and three operas in four acts. His operas include *Gloria y peluca, Jugor con fuego, El Marques de Caravaca, La Espada de Bernardo, La Hechiera, Los Diamantes de la coronna, La Maya,* and *Los Comediantes de antano,* all of which were brought out with considerable success at Madrid, where he died on February 9, 1894. Apart from the stage, he held a high position as teacher and critic. In 1859 he established a series of *concerts spirituels,* and was connected with various other institutions for the encouragement of good music.

José Rogel produced 65 zarzuelas between 1854 and 1880. Manuel Fernandez, Joaquin Gaztambide, Don Juan Arrieta, Cristobál Outrid y Segura, Ruperto Chapi and Angela Rubio have all been prolific composers of zarzuelas, and during the past decade Chueca, Breton, Valverde, Serrano, Barrera and others have also been active as operatic composers. Isidore de Lara has not produced his operas in Spain.

Felipe Pedrell is considered the most prominent Spanish composer of to-day, and his trilogy *Los Perineos* attracted wide attention when it was performed at Barcelona in 1902. Since then he has composed the operas *Celestina* (1904), *La Matinada* (1903), and recently *Le Comte d'Arnam.*

The Opera in Russia.

In Russia the development of opera, and, indeed, of music generally, is of comparatively recent date. Glinka (1803-1857), the founder of the school, is still perhaps its most famous representative, although his operas, in spite of frequent trials, seem never to succeed beyond the frontiers of Russia. The splendid patriotism of *Life for the Czar* (1836), his most famous work, endears him to the hearts of his countrymen.

Russlan and Ludmila (1858), Glinka's second work, is founded upon a fantastic Russian legend of magic and necromancy. It has not the national and patriotic interest of *Life for the Czar,* but as music it deserves to rank higher. Berlioz thought very highly of it. Nevertheless it may be doubted whether, at this time of day, there is any likelihood of Glinka becoming popular outside of Russia. Glinka had an extraordinary natural talent, and had he lived in closer touch with the musical world, he might have become one of the great composers of the century. Melody he had in abundance, and his feeling for musical form was strong, though only partially developed. He had little dramatic instinct, and it is singular that he should be known principally as a composer for the stage. His treatment of the or-

chestra was brilliant and effective, but the national element in his music is the *signe particulier* of his style. He rarely used actual Russian folk-tunes, but his music is colored throughout by the plaintive melancholy of the national type. A composer, whose music smells so strongly of the soil, can scarcely expect to be appreciated abroad.

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Dargomishky (1813-1869) and Serov (1818-1871) are unfamiliar names in England and America. The former, during his lifetime, was content to follow in the steps of Glinka, but his opera, *The Marble Guest,* a treatment of the story of Don Juan, which was produced after his death, broke entirely fresh ground. This work is completely modern in thought and expression, and may be regarded as the foundation of modern Russian opera. Serov was an enthusiastic imitator of Wagner, and even his own countrymen admit that his works have little musical value.

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Rubinstein (1829-1895) wrote many works for the stage, and during the last years of his life founded something like a new form of art in his sacred operas, *Moses* and *Christus,* the latter of which was produced after his death at Bremen. Critics differ very much as to Rubinstein's merits as a composer, but as to the quality of his work for the stage there can hardly be two opinions. His music is essentially undramatic. None of his works, at any rate outside of Russia, has achieved more than a passing success. *The Demon* (1875), a strange story of the love of a demon for a

Russian princess, has some fine music in it, but the story is almost totally devoid of incident, and the opera as a whole is intolerably wearisome. His earlier operas include *Dimitri Donskoi* (1852), Die *Sibirischen Jäger* (1852), *Toms der Narr* (1853) and *Hadji-Abrek* (1853). He also was the composer of *Feramors* (1863), *The Maccabees* (1875), and *Nero* (1879). *Nero* abounds in spectacular effects, and was presented in America by the American Opera Company during the season 1886-1887.

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Tschaikowski (1840-1893) is, in the opinion of many critics, the greatest musical genuis that Russia has produced so far. His compositions bear the impress of the Slavonic temperament—fiery exaltation and lanquid melancholy. He is fond of huge and fantastic outlines, of bold modulations, of strongly marked rhythms, of subtle melodic turns, and he delights in gorgeous effect of orchestration. His music, therefore, gives the impression of spontaneous originality. No composer has ever handled music with a more delicate appreciation of its manifold possibilities. In his hands the orchestra becomes alive, an instrumental chorus taught to breathe at his will every accent of human emotion.

His operas include *Voyevoda* (1869), *Opritchnik* (1874), *Wakula the Smith* (1876), *Eugene Onegin* (1879), *The Maid of Orleans* (1881), *Mazeppa* (1882), *Tscharavitchki* (1886), *Tscharodeika* (1887), *Pique Dame* (1890), and *Iolanthe* (1893). His best

known opera is *Eugene Onegin,* which is occasionally presented outside of Russia. Much of the music is delightful, but the opera is unfortunately hampered by the disconnected nature of the libretto.

Le Flibustier, an opera by César Cui, was performed in Paris a few years ago with even less success. Borodin's *Prince Igor* and *Die Mainacht,* by Rimsky-Korsakov, are thought highly of by the fellow-countrymen of the composers, but neither work has succeeded in crossing the frontier of Russia.

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Poland has not hitherto taken a prominent place in the history of opera, and the successful production of *Manru* (1901), an opera by Ignaz Paderewski, the world-famous pianist, is hardly to be taken as the foundation of a new school. Paderewski's music is thoroughly German in style, but he makes clever use of gypsy tunes and rhythms, which give a welcome variety to the score.

Scandinavian Opera.

Like the Russians, the Scandinavians established a distinct school by emphasizing the national element in music. The recent Scandinavian operas have been influenced by Liszt and Wagner, and, to some extent, by the musical ideas of Berlioz, but their success with the general public was largely due to the fact that they abound in the plaintive sweetness of the native folk-music. The main characteristics of the school are the artistic use of dissonances and an emphasis of rhythm, rather than of melody.

The earliest operas written upon Danish texts were by German composers who lived in Denmark. The more prominent of these include J. A. Schultze (1747-1800), Friedrich Kunzen (1761-1817), Christoph Weyse (1774-1842), and Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832). The first Danish composer of note was Berggreen (1801-1880), whose opera, *Billedet og Busten,* appeared in 1832.

Hartmann's *Linden Kirsten* (1846) and Heise's *Drot og Marsk* (1870) were the only native operas that attracted much attention till August Enna's opera, *Die Hexe,* created a sensation in Copenhagen, in 1892. Enna brought out *Kleopatra* in 1894, and *Aucassin and Nicolette* in 1896. He afterwards won wide reknown as a composer of fairy operas, the libretti

of which were founded on the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen.

The operas of Lassen, another Danish composer of note, include *Hero, Der Marmeluk,* and *Die Schwalbe.*

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The first company of note to introduce opera in Sweden was Häffner (1759-1833), a German who settled in Stockholm in 1780. His operas, however, were to a great extent an imitation of Gluck. The first composer of consequence, who was actually born in Sweden, was Franz Berwald (1796-1868), who wrote six operas, but Ivar Hallström, born in Stockholm in 1826, is generally credited with having introduced a national opera in Sweden, as his operas bear the stamp of Swedish origin. His operatic productions at Stockholm comprise *Herbig Magnus* (1867), *The Rape of the Mountain Maid* (1874), *Der Bergkönig* (1873), and the *Vikings* (1877).

Though the operas of Hallen, born in 1846, appear to have been strongly influenced by Wagner, they also preserve Swedish characteristics. His first opera, *Harold the Viking,* was followed by *Valdemarskatten* and *Walborgsmässa.* Wilhelm Stenhammer, born in Stockholm in 1871, is another composer of the Wagnerian school. Wilhelm Peterson Berger, like Wagner, has written his own libretti, and his operas, *Sveagaldrar* and *Das Glück,* have attained considerable popularity.

In Sweden, of late, there are signs of marked progress in operatic productions, and there is evidence of promising national enthusiasm.

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Norway may well be proud of claiming such a great composer of songs and instrumental pieces as Edward Grieg, but her native composers in the operatic field have not won special renown. Although Grieg wrote the incidental music for Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* and Björnson's *Olar Trygvason,* he can scarcely be classed as an operatic composer.

The first opera by a Norwegian composer seems to have been *Fredkulla,* by O. Winter-Hjelm, an organist who was born in 1837; but there is no authentic record that his opera was ever produced. Johannes Haarklou, born in 1847, composed the operas *Fra gamle Dage* and *Vaerringare i Myklagaard.* Cath. Elling, born in 1858, is the composer of an opera called *Kosakkerne.* Gerhard Schjelderup, born in 1859, composed the music for a lyrical drama *Norwegische Hochzeit.*

Ole Olsen, born at Hammerfest in 1850, and appointed director of military music to the Swedish Government in 1900, composed the operas *Stig Hvide, Lejla* and *Stallo,* also a fairy opera called *Svein Urad.*

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In Finland the organist Oskar Merikanto, born in 1868, composed the opera *Das Mädchen von Pohja,* and another Finnish composer, Karl Flodin, born in 1858, wrote the incidental music for Hauptmann's *Hannele.*

The Opera in America.

The earliest American opera of which we have any record was *the Archers; or, The Mountaineers of Switzerland,* which was written by Benjamin Carr, in 1756. This was followed by *The Disappointment,* by Andrew Barton, in 1767, *The Vintage* in 1790 and *Edwin and Angelina* in 1798, the latter two by Victor Pellesier. William Henry Fry, however, was the first American to attempt to compose anything akin to grand opera. His *Leonora* was brought out in Philadelphia in 1843, and nineteen years later he composed the music for *Notre Dame de Paris,* which was based on the models of French operas.

The Scarlet Letter, a grand opera by Walter J. Damrosch, was brought out in 1896. The text, based on Hawthorne's famous romance, was written by George Parsons Lathrop. The opera failed, however, owing to heavy orchestration and lack of genuine musical inspiration. Mr. Damrosch, despite the statement made at the time of the production of *The Scarlet Letter,* was by no means the first to compose an opera on an American theme. George F. Bristow composed the music for an operatic version of *Rip Van Winkle,* which was produced at Niblo's Garden, New York, in 1855, and Max Maretzek composed the music for *La Spia,* based on Cooper's novel, *The Spy.*

A number of American composers have tried their

hand at grand opera in recent years. Edgar Stillman Kelley achieved some measure of success with his opera *Macbeth,* as did also Silas G. Pratt with his operatic version of *Lucille;* but by far the larger number of grand operas by American composers have never been published or produced.

Prof. John K. Paine is the composer of an opera called *Azara.* The theme is a tale of mediæval chivalry, the scene being laid in Provence. Frederick S. Converse produced *The Pipe of Desire* in 1905.

Comic opera has been much more flourishing in America than grand opera. The comic opera composers of contemporaneous fame include Reginald De Koven, Victor Herbert, John P. Sousa and many others.

Julius Eichberg, a native of Germany, who settled in Boston, brought out in that city in 1862 a comic operetta in two acts called *The Doctor of Alcantara,* which met with considerable success.

Probably the best known comic opera of American make is *Robin Hood,* which was produced in Chicago in 1890, and was played season after season throughout the United States and elsewhere. The tuneful music of this opera was composed by Reginald De Koven, and a clever libretto was supplied by Harry B. Smith.

Another successful production was the comic opera *El Capitan,* by John Philip Sousa. Victor Herbert has attained comic opera fame through such popular productions as *The Wizard of the Nile, The Fortune Teller, Babes in Toyland,* etc.

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Besides those cited above, the list of so-called Ameri-

can operas includes *Lord Buncombe's Daughter* by Timothy Adamowski; *Captain Kidd* by Rudolph Aronson; *The Water Carriers, The Roundheads and Cavaliers,* and *Adaline* by Alfred Arthur; *William Penn* by B. F. Baker; *La Valliére* by Homer N. Bartlett; *Cassilda* by William K. Bassford; *Salammbo* by Johann H. Beck; *Daphne* by Arthur Bird; *The Light Keeper's Daughter* by Charles D. Blake; *The Bride of Messina* and *Ostrolenka* by Johann H. Bonawitz; *Deseret* by Dudley Buck; *Mizpah* by Frank A. Burr; *Romance of a Summer* by James A. Butterfield; *Tabasco* and *Judith* by George W. Chadwick; *A Woman of Marblehead* by L. A. Coerne; *The Faith of November* and *Sir Roger de Coverley* by F. M. Crouch; *Pauline* by H. P. Danks; *The Begum, Don Quixote, The Fencing Master, The Knickerbockers, The Algerian, Rob-Roy, The Tzigane, The Mandarin, The Paris Doll, The Highwayman, The Three Dragoons, Maid Marian, Papa's Wife, Foxy Quiller, Little Duchess, Red Feather, Elysia* and *The Student King,* by Reginald De Koven; *Nina* by Anton C. Eggers; *The Rose of Tyrol, The Two Cadis,* and *A Night in Rome* by Julius Eichberg; *Treasured Tokens, Valerie* and *Leonello* by James R. Fairlamb; *Miles Standish* by Francesco Fanciulli; *Inferno, Les Tours de Mercure, Suzanne, Sulda* and *Uncle Tom* by Caryl Florio; *Otho Visconti* and *Montezuma* by Frederick G. Gleason; *Soldiers' Return, Saratoga, Newport* and *The Commodore* by Robert Goldbeck; *Charles IV.* and *Isaura de Salerno* by Louis M. Gottschalk; *Tovelille, Hjalmar and Ingeborg, La Vendetta* and *The Traveler* by Asger Hamerik; *Mlle. Maie et M. de Lembre* by William V. Harris; *Love's*

Stowaway by George Henschel; *Prince Ananias, The Serenade, The Idol's Eye, Cyrano de Bergerac, The Ameer, The Viceroy, The Singing Girl, Babette, Mlle. Modiste,* and *It Happened in Nordland* by Victor Herbert; *Our Flats* by Edouard Holst; *Rip Van Winkle* by Jules Jordan; *Puritania* by Edgar S. Kelley; *Miles Standish* by Franz Kielblock; *Keno* by Bruno O. Klein; *The Widow* by Calixo Lavelle; *Mercedes, The Adventure Club* and *Flowers and Lilies* by W. J. D. Leavitt; *The Maid of Athens* and *The Burglar's Bride* by Harvey W. Loomis; *The Pearl of Bagdad* by J. M. Lorenz; *Hamlet* and *Sleepy Hollow* by Max Maretzek; *Last Will and Testament, Katie Dean,* and *The Runaway Flirt* by Karl Merz; *Deborah* by Harrison Millard; *The Corsican Bride* by Edward Mollenhauer; *The Rat Catcher of Hamelin* and *Don Quixote* by Adolph Neuendorff; *The First Lieutenant* and *Villiers* by N. C. Page; *Zenobia* and *Antonio* by Silas G. Pratt; *Esmeralda* by Eugene Prevost; *Phyllis* by G. F. Rowe; *Leila* by Harry R. Shelley; *The Free Lance, The Smugglers, Desiree, The Queen of Hearts, The Bride Elect, The Charlatan, Chris and the Wonderful Lamp* and *Katherine* by John P. Sousa; *Lee-li-nan* by Richard Stahl; *Priscille; or the Pilgrims' Proxy* and *Cascabel* by Thomas W. Susette; *The Venetian Maskers* by Phillippe Trajetta; *Amy Gassenet* by G. W. Tryon; *Vlascla* by Frank Vanderstucken; *The Sultan of Sulu* by Alfred G. Walthall; *Pyramus and Thisbe* by Oscar Weil; *Lawn Tennis, Pounce & Co.* and *Westward Ho* by Benjamin E. Woolf; and *Onganita* by Corinne Young.

In the above list the operas have been credited to the composers, but in many instances, especially where comic operas are concerned, the authors of the "book" or libretto are entitled to equal credit, either for the success or failure of the opera in question. As H. E. Krehbiel, the musical critic, has aptly put it: "We have a Mr. George Ade, who pokes fun at national institutions and typifies a peculiarly national humor quite as effectually as Mr. Gilbert, but Mr. Ade is unfortunately as yet a Gilbert without a Sullivan."

Mr. Ade wrote the libretto of *The Sultan of Sulu, Peggy from Paris,* and *The Sho-Gun.* Harry B. Smith is exceedingly clever, and is much in demand as a librettist. J. Chever Goodwin, of *Evangeline* fame, wrote the libretti for *Wang, The Merry Monarch* and other comic operas or musical comedies, or whatever classification they are entitled to. George V. Hobart, Sydney Rosenfeld and Edgar Smith have also been industrious text contributors to musical productions.

The majority of productions styled "comic operas" by courtesy in America are nothing more than burlesques or musical comedies, and frequently they are merely an indescribable hodge-podge of vulgar horseplay and vaudeville specialties interspersed with topical songs, popular ballads, and dances by show girls in flashy costumes. It is to be hoped that American composers and librettists will turn out more comic operas on a par with *Robin Hood,* and fewer musical concoctions of the type that cater to the lowest order of theatrical taste.